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ABSTRACT

The publication consists of an independent study course on contemporary problems and contemporary literature for secondary and college students. The major objective is to help students think creatively about current problems of the American Indians, Blacks, women, and ecology and to sharpen the student's ability to interpret works of literature. Assignments consist of readings followed by questions which are to be answered in essay form. A choice of essay topics is provided. The time allowed for completing the course is one year from the date of enrollment; a six-month extension is granted upon payment of a five dollar fee. The course consists of the following four sections: 1) The First Americans: Indians; 2) Soul Brothers and Sisters: Afro-Americans; 3) The Other Half: Women; 4) Collision-Course: Ecology, the Future. Suggested supplemental reading materials are provided for each section. Guidelines for independent study are included. (Author/RM)

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UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

# Extramural Independent Study Center

THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS / AT LAWRENCE

ED 090120

# MODULAR CURRICULUM:
# ENGLISH/SOCIAL STUDIES
## *Contemporary Literature/*
## *Contemporary Problems*
1972

Course Prepared by

Ruth Mikkelson
Instructor of English
Extramural Independent Study Center
The University of Kansas

This module represents either nine or eighteen weeks' work; it can be tailored to suit individual needs. Credit is to be determined by the institution recording the work. Students enrolled through E.I.S.C. will receive ¼ or ½ unit credit, depending on the number of assignments completed as specified in the Preface.

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Lawrence, Kansas

# GUIDELINES FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY

Your instructor for this course is:

Please contact him directly on questions about the course. For further assistance with problems with courses or instructors, for advice in planning an independent study program, or for information on courses and services offered elsewhere, please contact: Student Services, Extramural Independent Study Center, The University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66044.

The mechanics of independent study are as follows:

Completing Assignments. Your writing assignments should be the result of your own thought and work. There may be times, however, when you will want to refer to ideas or passages from authoritative sources. In all such cases you are required to fully identify the author, source title, and page numbers (or individual, date of conversation, etc. where applicable). Plagiarism will result in your being dropped from the course.

Assignments for most courses should be submitted on specially designed paper, a pad of which is included with your syllabus. (You may order additional pads from the Center for $1.25 each.) Always write your name, address, the course name and number, the number of the assignment, and the page number at the top of each page. Either type your answers double-spaced or write them neatly in black or blue-black ink, using only one side of the paper.

Submitting Assignments. Mail your completed assignments in a No. 10 business-style envelope to your instructor, folding the pages of the assignment together with the heading on the outside. *Do not submit your second assignment until the first assignment has been returned.* Thereafter you may submit as many as five assignments per week unless your instructor requests otherwise. If you wish to submit more than five assignments per week, you must have the permission of your instructor. Your lessons should be returned to you within two weeks if you are located within the continental United States. *We urge you to keep a copy of all work you submit.*

NOTE: During vacation periods, many instructors are away and your assignments may have to be forwarded. If you need to complete this course by a certain time, you should start work early enough that a slight delay during vacations will not adversely affect your schedule.

Time Limits for Completing the Course. The time allowed for completing an independent study course from the Center is one year from the date of enrollment. A six-month extension is granted upon payment of a $5 fee, which must be paid prior to the conclusion of the one-year period allowed for completing the course. All extensions become effective at the expiration of the one-year period.

Examinations. Your application for an examination must be received by the Center at least one week before the date on which you wish to take the examination. Do *not* submit examination requests to your instructor.

College-level examinations, when taken in Kansas, must be administered through one of the following: the Extramural Independent Study Center at The University of Kansas, an official of a state college or university, the dean of a private Kansas college or university to which you want your credits forwarded, or one of the Independent Study Examination Centers in the state. (For a list of examination centers, see the Schedule of Examinations included with your course materials.) Out-of-state enrollees must arrange with an official of an accredited college (such as an academic dean or registrar) to have their examinations proctored. If there is no accredited college in your vicinity, you may arrange for supervision with the local superintendent of schools or a secondary-school principal.

High school course examinations should be administered by your principal, counselor, or superintendent of schools. You must make your own arrangements for supervision.

Your final examination will not be returned to you. It may be reviewed only at the Center.

Refunds on Fees and Texts. You may obtain a partial refund of fees if you have completed no more than five lessons and apply within six weeks of the date of your enrollment. The course fee minus $5 for registration and $3 for each corrected lesson will be returned to you upon application. *No portion of the instructional materials fee, the price of special readers, or the postage can be refunded.*

Within a six-weeks free drop period, full refund will be made for new and used textbooks returned to the Kansas Union Bookstore, provided they have the price stickers on them. New texts must be unmarked; damaged books (including mail damage) will be repurchased as used books. Shipping charges are not refundable. If you want to resell your books after the six-weeks period, you should contact the bookstore by mail and specify the titles. The bookstore will then notify you on which books they will repurchase and at what prices.

Course Completion. After you have completed your independent study course, you will receive a notice of your grade, along with an evaluation form which will provide you an opportunity to inform us of the strengths and weaknesses of the course. We look forward to hearing from you.

We hope that your experience with independent study is both useful and enjoyable.

*Contemporary Literature/Contemporary Problems*

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*Contemporary Literature/Contemporary Problems*

## PREFACE

Required Texts (All are available in paperback editions):

For One-Quarter Unit Credit:

Momaday, N. Scott. HOUSE MADE OF DAWN. Signet, The New American Library, 1968.
Ellison, Ralph. INVISIBLE MAN. Signet, The New American Library, 1952.
Roszak, Betty, and Theodore Roszak. MASCULINE/FEMININE. Harper Colophon Books, Harper and Row, 1969.
Burgess, Anthony. THE WANTING SEED. Ballantine Books, 1962.

For One-Half Unit Credit:
In addition to the selections above, choose five books from the following list:

Brandon, William, editor. THE MAGIC WORLD: AMERICAN INDIAN SONGS AND POEMS. Morrow Paperback Editions, William Morrow and Company, 1971.
Neihardt, John G. BLACK ELK SPEAKS. A Bison Book, University of Nebraska Press, 1961.
Baldwin, James. GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN. Signet, The New American Library, 1952.
Angelou, Maya. I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS. Bantam, 1969.
Brown, Claude. MANCHILD IN THE PROMISED LAND. Signet, The New American Library, 1965.
Woolf, Virginia. A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN. Harbinger, Harcourt Brace and World, 1929.
de Beauvoir, Simone. THE SECOND SEX. Bantam, 1952.
Vonnegut, Kurt, Jr. WELCOME TO THE MONKEY HOUSE. Dell, 1950.
Leopold, Aldo. A SAND COUNTY ALMANAC. Ballantine, 1949.

Books may be ordered from the Kansas Union Bookstore, Lawrence, Kansas, 66044. They will be sent C.O.D. on request and on receipt of a $2.00 deposit.

Although you are free to use library copies of the books, all quotations used here will be taken from the above editions.

At the end of each section you will find a list of supplemental-reading suggestions. These are books about the issue of the section which I think you will find interesting and helpful. The majority of these works have been published within the last ten-to-twenty years; however, I have included several earlier works because of their particular relevancy. Most, but not all, of these works are also in paperback. They are recommended directions for your further independent study. I hope that when you have the time, you will want to refer to these lists and read some of the works to broaden your knowledge about the issue discussed.

## Why study *Contemporary Literature/Contemporary Problems?*

Poverty. Racism. Sexism. Overpopulation. War. Identity crisis. Oppression. Drug addiction. Suicide. Urban blight. Pollution. This is the stuff of which headlines are made today. This is the stuff that leads humankind to revolt--or to lead lives of quiet desperation. This is also the stuff of which good literature is often made. And this will be the stuff of our course.

Why should you bother to study these issues? Why, for example, grapple with the problems, the heartaches of an indigent Indian if you do not belong to the red race? The answer is obvious: because you are a part of the human race. Four centuries ago John Donne said:

> No man is an *Iland*, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the *Continent*, a part of the *maine*; if a *Clod* bee washed away by the *Sea*, *Europe* is the lesse. . . . Any mans *death* diminishes *me*, because I am involved in *Mankinde*. . . .[1]

Songwriters today echo this theme in lyrics that extol the brotherhood of man.

A second reason for studying these issues is that many older people have always looked to youth, traditionally idealistic and concerned about injustice, to offer fresh insights about healing society's wounds. And right now, if you are young, you belong to the first generation able to take direct part in the running of our government. Since eighteen-year-olds can vote, and in many areas run for office, you have an even more immediate stake in understanding the problems of your country.

One of the functions of literature is to permit readers to share experiences they otherwise would not have. Because an emotional as well as an intellectual intimacy is established between readers and characters of literature, deeper--or at least different--understandings and insights accrue than through the reading of news reports or textbooks. The remote becomes close, the abstract becomes concrete, the "problem" becomes part of one's own life when the reader can empathize with a character. To accomplish all this requires technical skill on the part of the writer and interpretive skill on the part of the reader.

---

[1] John Donne, "17. Meditation" from "Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions" in SEVENTEENTH CENTURY VERSE AND PROSE, Vol. I, 1600-1660, ed. Helen C. White, Ruth C. Wallerstein, and Ricardo Quintana (New York: Macmillan, 1951), p. 109.

## Objectives

It is my hope that during this course you, the student, will glean new understandings of the issues considered (content) and, subordinately, of the author's skill in presenting them (form). The intent of the course is to help you to think creatively about these concerns and the way in which they are presented by these authors. Concomitantly, you will be sharpening your own ability to interpret works of literature. Hopefully, you will enjoy the study and be led to further independent inquiry.

Specifically, what is in store for you? You can learn much about the plight facing young American Indians today from reading the story of Abel in HOUSE MADE OF DAWN. Reading the thoughts of an articulate Black writer--one who has "been there," been an "invisible man"--can sharpen your understanding of racism and its effects. Whether you are masculine or feminine, chances are you haven't looked at the position of women in our society in the same ways some of the writers in our selections have. Nothing reveals the world's dubious progress as well as the futuristic novel; you will have the opportunity to explore some gruesome consequences of present trends in THE WANTING SEED. And finally, to weep with and for some of the characters in these books--that is to understand something of the heart of American today.

Although as responsible human beings we will keep on trying to solve the problems of humanity, it is not the purpose of this course to arrive at glib, easy solutions; indeed, there are none. Instead, it is hoped that, by probing and examination, you will arrive at a better understanding of the problems, that you will add a new dimension to or perhaps alter your already existing body of knowledge, values, and insights related to each issue.

Admittedly, my personal bias shows on some issues. My purpose is not to avoid controversy, although I do try to be fair. In my opinion, high school courses have too long avoided controversy, and the results have often been bland and insipid. This approach should stimulate you to think. Of course, you may disagree with me; just be able to support your opinions.

While dealing with the issues of this course, you should also become more sophisticated in interpreting works of literature, gaining practice in skills which eventually you will be able to apply independently to new material. Most works studied here are quite different from one another, both in genre (novel, essay, short story, poetry, drama, autobiography) and in treatment within that genre. As we progress, I will try to guide you in discovering some of the most important devices--for example, symbolism and irony--authors use to achieve their results.

Not even with the addition of the supplemental reading lists does this course pretend to be inclusive, either of relevant issues or of contemporary literature dealing with them; some arbitrary decisions were necessary in designing it. Perhaps a word ought to be mentioned about minority groups that we will not study, other groups that are also oppressed in America--Chicanos, or Mexican Americans; Puerto Ricans; and migrant workers, a group that, not surprisingly, includes primarily members of oppressed minorities--all from the bottom of the American Dream refuse pile. A study of each of these groups would be fruitful. We cannot claim that by briefly studying the American Indians and Afro-Americans, we will know about the Puerto Ricans in America, for each group is unique in many respects. There are many other topics besides ecology and the future that would be interesting to pursue: the counter-culture, innovative education, drug addiction, mental illness, to mention only a few. However, we must continually defer to that convenient scapegoat Time, and state once again that we simply cannot begin to approach a complete study of America's problems within the confines of this course, and have consequently been forced to delete certain groups and topics that certainly deserve attention.

You should be aware, in addition, that the literature chosen for this course did not appear in a vacuum; there is a tradition of literature of social consciousness in America as well as in other countries. Within this tradition the writers we shall read hope to secure a niche, but again the limitations of this course prevent us from chronologically exploring social-consciousness literature. Throughout recorded history literature has often been the product of its environment; writers of each age have perceived the issues of their time, defined them, perhaps commented on them. Among past writers concerned with social problems, Charles Dickens, Upton Sinclair, John Steinbeck, and George Orwell were some of the most influential. Current writers are fortunate to have these precedents on which to build.

## Completing Assignments

Each of the four sections of the course begins with an introduction to the issue which should be read before you pursue a particular assignment. Obviously, the issues are much too complex to cover in any but a cursory manner. These overviews should serve as signposts to some salient features of each issue and as background material you will need before approaching the literature.

The assignment itself will provide you with pertinent information about the book under consideration and its author. It will also help you in understanding difficult aspects of the work studied. Read (or review) all the preliminary material each time before you begin the reading assignment.

Since most of the selections are short, it is reasonable to expect that you read each one twice: first quickly, to enjoy and grasp the plot line, then more carefully, to interpret and to look for answers to the writing assignments. Between readings one and two, read the writing assignment. As you write, you will want to refer again to sections of the text.

For most of the assignments you have a choice of essay topics. The most important consideration in my evaluation of your responses will be what you say: how perceptive, observant, and original your answers are, how well you have assimilated the material. Your conclusions are not always as important as how you arrived at them. For most of the questions, there are no right or wrong answers, only more or less thoughtful responses. Answer all the questions under each numbered topic you select, but don't hesitate to go further than the questions suggest; these are designed primarily to stimulate your thinking, not to confine it.

In preparing your answers, you should use the best English you can muster. This might necessitate your writing with a dictionary, thesaurus, and handbook of usage nearby. Generally, each paragraph should have a topic sentence supported by specific material. Try not to parrot clichés; write honestly, logically.

In the first lesson I have done much of the work for you. Since each teacher approaches a subject differently and I cannot answer your spontaneous questions in person, I have thought it best to do one lesson in greater detail for you. This has been done to help you understand the way I would like you to analyze works in subsequent chapters.

Although each lesson is somewhat self-contained, there is a logical progression, so please do one lesson at a time in the order they are presented here. If you were a student in my classroom, you would be expected to complete each assignment in about one-and-one-half weeks; since you are not, work at your own pace, with that schedule as a guideline.

## Credit Options

Both one-quarter and one-half unit students are required to complete the reading and writing assignments for the first assignment (designated by asterisks) of each of the four parts of the course. In other words, all students must complete Assignments I, IV, VIII, and XI.

Those of you who have enrolled in this course for one-half unit credit will have the opportunity to construct half of your course, within limitations. As indicated in the required-text list at the beginning of this Preface, you will need to read and complete assignments for five additional works. These readings are to be selected by you from among the remaining assignments that are not required for all students in the four parts. Your five optional assignments may be comprised of any combination; for example, you may choose to concentrate in two areas or to do additional work in each of the four areas. Although you may begin an optional assignment at any point in the course, you may not do so unless you have already completed the required assignment for the section you wish to pursue further. You may turn in all assignments for a section one after the other, or you may make your five optional choices after you have completed the four required assignments and turn them in as you complete them.

While each of the four required reading and writing assignments are of approximately comparable difficulty, the optional choices are not. I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS and SAND COUNTY ALMANAC, for example, are among the easier reading assignments; THE SECOND SEX is much more difficult. Consequently, you have choices, not only of subject matter but also of levels of difficulty. You should review the introductory material in each assignment before making your five optional-reading selections. It is hoped that you will select works that are challenging to you personally and commensurate with your abilities.

## Examinations and Grading

Whether you have enrolled in this course for one-quarter or one-half unit credit, your final examination will take the same form. Instead of an actual "final," you will be asked to complete a final assignment, more on the order of a term paper, written within the time normally allotted to an examination. There will be a list of several topics from which you will choose one and write an extended essay. In this essay you should bring together material from all the books you have read for this course. An example of the kind of topic that might be listed is "The Individual vs. Society." Your job will be to show what each book you studied said or implied about the topic and then to relate the various positions to each other. This essay will show how well you have assimilated disparate materials and can synthesize them with regard to a unifying theme, making comparisons and contrasts to support your interpretations. It will not be an open-book test.

For your final grade, each lesson (including the final examination) will count equally, one-fifth or one-tenth, depending on whether you are to receive one-fourth or one-half unit credit. The instructor reserves the right to weight the final examination more heavily if it demonstrates a drastic change from the quality of the regular assignments.

One final word: Since this course is problem-centered, it is unlikely to leave you feeling optimistic--unless your inner resources are such that you can see beyond the problems to a better world. And unless you resolve to make contributions to the solving of these problems.

# PART ONE

## *The First Americans: Indians, Native Americans*

The name "American Indian" is a misnomer, persisting from the mistake of Columbus who was searching for India; that is why some now prefer the more accurate term "Native American." But more than a new name, Native Americans need, and are entitled to, an eradication of some of the misconceptions surrounding them. They need an appreciation of their own way of life as different from that of the predominant white culture, and the freedom to live as they wish.

> It seemed that a white man was introduced to an old chief in New York City. Taking a liking to the old man, the white man invited him to dinner. The old chief hadn't eaten a good steak in a long time and eagerly accepted. He finished one steak in no time and still looked hungry. So the white man offered to buy him another steak.
>
> As they were waiting for the steak, the white man said, "Chief, I sure wish I had your appetite."
>
> "I don't doubt it, white man," the chief said. "You took my land, you took my mountains and streams, you took my salmon and my buffalo. You took everything I had except my appetite and now you want that. Aren't you ever going to be satisfied?"[1]

Despite the old Western movies and books that stereotype Indians as savage, cruel, grunting beasts, and white men as heroic squareshooters, thoughtful people now realize that white Americans' treatment of their country's first inhabitants has been one of the most shameful chapters in all history. Merciless warfare tactics, broken treaties, sabotage (for example, the giving of smallpox-infested blankets to a freezing tribal remnant in return for land), discriminatory interpretation of laws, eradication of culture--yes, even genocide--have been basic to this country's conception.

And we have not stopped perpetuating these injustices, as revealed in these statistics, most of them taken from the period 1965-1970:

> Between 1887 and 1966 the Indian land base has decreased from 138 million acres to 55 million.
>
> The Indian's average yearly income, $1500, is less than half the national poverty level; his unemployment rate is 70% of the national figure.

---

[1] Vine Deloria, Jr., CUSTER DIED FOR YOUR SINS (New York: Avon, 1969), p. 159.

His life expectancy is forty-four years, one-third less than the national average of sixty-seven, and ten years less than that of blacks.

Ninety-nine per cent of reservation housing is substandard, that is, without running water.

The infant mortality rate after the first month of life is three times the national figure.

The suicide rate among Indian teenagers is five times the national average. In a recent test, Indian youths in the twelfth grade had the poorest self-concept of all minority groups tested.

Their average educational level is fifth grade.

They have the highest rate of alcoholism of all ethnic groups.

And only 4% of Indians eligible to vote actually do so.

This is a grim portrait of 600,000 descendants of the original Americans.

But to survey, in such a cursory manner as we have just done, history or current statistics, deplorable as they may seem, can only lead to too superficial an appraisal, for these approaches overlook the complexity of the issue. For instance, a particular Indian may prefer to get his water from a stream than to turn a faucet in his house. He may prefer to instill tribal values in his children at home rather than to send them far away to learn alien values at school.

Although intertribal differences are great, there is a unique ethos that all Indians share. White men have heretofore ignored this ethos in imposing their solutions--always predicated on the assumption that Indians must assimilate--on what they consider to be the white man's problem, the Indian. Only now, with the emphasis on minority groups and ecology, are non-Indians beginning to appreciate the ethos of their country's first inhabitants.

We cannot examine this ethos in detail here, but one of its most important foundations is the belief that man is a part of nature; from this springs his whole life--his religion, his art, his festivities, his eating and drinking, and his interpersonal relationships--all are centered around harmony with nature. This view is directly opposed to the predominating one of our country: that man is to have dominion over nature, to subjugate it and twist it to his own, usually economic, ends. Some of the implications of this dichotomy of philosophy are summarized in this statement:

> Indians are confronting white America with the contention that the Anglo-Saxon heritage may be suicide; the blind reliance on technology may be deadly; that the concept of radically improving on what nature has provided may be foolish and that the arrogant assumption of a manifest destiny may yet catch up with the most powerful nation on earth.[2]

---

[2] Frye Gaillard, INDIANS IN REVOLT: A Report of the Race Relations Center of Nashville (Nashville, Tenn., 1970).

From time immemorial the Indian social unit has been organized communally; only within the last decade has there been a resurgence of communal living among white people. From infancy, Indians are taught cooperation, sharing whatever they have with other tribal members. Each person has his place and his part to contribute, but it is the tribe that is more important than the individual. According to this ethos, death is placed in a very different perspective from that of the white world, as we shall see in BLACK ELK SPEAKS. The tribe is like a very large extended family, with responsibilities for child-raising, food-gathering, governing, censuring, formerly hunting and war-making, all shared by each member rather than borne solely by a nuclear family as in most of the Western world.

While all of this is true, still the Indian knows that the buffalo are indeed gone, that much of nature is despoiled, that he has little land left on which to practice his chosen life style, that learning tribal skills ill prepares him for earning his bread and butter in the predominating culture of this land--in short, survival dictates that some kind of compromise be made with the white man's world.

Compromise between the two worlds necessarily evokes conflict and tension between them. Thus, we have a conflict between the gentle, close-to-nature, indigenous, community-oriented culture with its emphasis on individual worth and skills, and the fiercely competitive, technologically advanced, urban, alien, white man's world with its emphasis on mass production and self-orientation.

In our first book of this part, HOUSE MADE OF DAWN, we will see the tensions surrounding and frustrating the modern Indian. We will obtain only a taste of Indian culture and ethos, with Abel and Francisco on the reservation, and with Tosamah who combines modern Christianity with ancient peyote rites and oratory. In the next assignment, THE MAGIC WORLD, we will be dealing specifically with one aspect of Indian culture: poems and songs. And in the last lesson of this section, BLACK ELK SPEAKS, we shall read one man's eyewitness account of his dying culture around the turn of this century.

To say that the history of America begins with the arrival of Columbus in 1492 is an absurdity that has had crippling effects on our own understanding of the heritage of our land, to say nothing of the injustice done the Native Americans. How foolish of us, for instance, to ignore the great cultures of our hemisphere--the Indian city-states carved in stone of Mexico, Central America, and Peru--civilizations that were flowering while Europe was practically a nonentity, civilizations that had great influences on North America. With arrogant pride our history books tell about the culture the white man brought to the New World, dismissing--or worse, distorting--the indigenous culture to which most settlers never bothered to give a second glance, but which had been thriving for thousands of years before the white man's entry. (Anthropologists now estimate that Indians were living in North America as long ago as 10,000 B.C.)

To give you a taste of this history of the American Indian, here is reprinted an essay that emphasizes from an anthropological perspective the development of language and mythology, cultural facets with which we are more directly concerned in this course.

## Four World Corners

*Introduction to*
AMERICAN INDIAN MYTHOLOGY

*by* Alice Marriott and Carol Rachlin

In the closely twined cord of any people's lore and religion and history, there must be ravelings as well as knots. Often it is difficult to tease out the end to which a frayed strand leads.

The folklorist can never cease to be aware of this basic problem. Somehow, he must find the means to disentangle belief from fact, and to check his facts--once separated--against the lore that has been gathered and recorded from other peoples in other parts of the world.

For the anthropologist-folklorist, the demands of scientific conscience and of accuracy are perhaps more stringent than those made on the more casual collector of folk customs and folk tales. It is the bounden duty of the anthropologist to know first the history, as distinguished from the lore, of a given culture. Then he must learn that group's own interpretation of our common history, before he crosses the boundaries separating fact from legend from myth.

In this book the compilers, both anthropologists rather than folklorists, are attempting to present as best they can the lore of a people whose ways and customs are steadily combining with our own. "Myth" as we shall use the word applies to the actions and counteractions of supernatural beings. "Legend" is its humanized counterpart: the recording of the deeds and doings of earthly heroes, whether or not they trod the ground with historic feet. "Lore" or "folklore" applies to everyday happenings: the joking on a powwow ground or at a church social; the contemporary stories that are told and retold so often that they lose any tribal identity.

In the history of the North American Indians there are more holes than fabric. That fabric must be pieced together from field, library, and archival research; from the unearthings of archaeologists and from ethnologists' interviews with living informants. In a sense the historian must be the final critic of the combining. It is his word, based on the records of other cultures, compared, evaluated, and enumerated, that the anthropologist-folklorist can and should accept. For if any tale be told from one side, and then from another, its truths must tally and its strands be firmly twisted.

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In assembling this collection of myths, legends, and contemporary lore, the compilers have relied as much as possible on field data they themselves have collected, and only in rare instances have reproduced myths taken from other sources. In assembling the specimens to be photographed to illustrate the book, they have drawn on their own collections, on other collections in private hands, and on a few museum specimens.

Therefore the professional anthropologist, folklorist, or art historian should be cautioned--and hereby is--that many of the "classic" myths most often included in other collections have been omitted or presented in an unfamiliar form. The tired old "war horses" of North American Indian art, frequently used as illustrations in other volumes, are also absent. Both are available elsewhere. As much as possible, the compilers have attempted to assemble an original piece of work, and to give its parts the freshness with which they were heard or seen.

Anthropologists do not know all they wish to know about when, how, or from where in Asia American Indians first entered the New World. The anthropologists have the assurance of paleontologists that no type of prehuman remains have been found on the northern or the southern continent of the hemisphere. *Homo sapiens*, as far as present knowledge stands, is the only humanoid species that has occupied the Americas.

The fact that only remains of biologically modern man have so far been discovered in the New World indicates that the migrations which populated it took place in the last, or at least the latest, stage in the development of mankind. Men had become one biological species before the migrations began. Human subspecies could mate and intermate among themselves, at will and desire, when the New World was first populated.

The estimated dates for the arrival of the first of a long series of migrations into the Americas have varied from two thousand to ten thousand years before Christ. The latter date is more generally acceptable to anthropologists, and most of them agree that the migrations probably continued into the fourth century B.C.

The early travelers may have come a long way to reach the New World; some of them possibly from as far as central Asia. Some probably came the shorter distance from eastern Asia, and the possibility of raft transportation from the Pacific islands cannot yet be discarded.

The first groups of wanderers from Asia came with languages. They and their successors had knowledge of fire; they could make cordage from vegetable fibers or sinew, and weapons from stones. These earliest Americans had domesticated dogs but no other man-abiding animals. Certainly if they had language, they had mythologies.

Above all, these people crossed from one continent to the other with all the human feelings any of us know: fear and courage; love and its twin, hate; knowledge and dread of death, and delight at the conception and coming of new lives.

In the world left behind by the adventurers the wheel, the working and uses of metals, the sail, and writing had still to be invented, as did the domestication of most animals and of plants. None of these traits formed a part of the pioneers' intellectual baggage. And in the years and decades, centuries and millennia that followed their first arriving, throughout the lengthening sequence of later migrations, no American Indians have been known to have independently invented any of these things, except plant domestication and the working of soft metals into ornaments.

The migration pattern was not a simple west-to-east movement. Some groups followed the western mountain ranges from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego. Some stopped on the way; some turned back and reversed their steps to the northward along the coasts and rivers of the continents. In every place where the migrants settled there followed a period of learning to use and control their environments, and of adapting themselves to the ecology of the new area. In time, use and adaptation produced a series of widely varying cultures.

Probably a diversity of languages had existed before the groups left Asia. As one ethnic unit and then another spread and separated, came together and parted again, eight great linguistic stocks developed in North America. Among these eight stocks were divided the languages of more than two hundred ethnic units. Some languages were so closely related as to be mutually intelligible, true dialects of a mother tongue. In other instances, speakers of two different but related languages were unable to comprehend each other's words. And in still others, two languages of different stocks were used by neighboring groups until a sort of lingua franca was formed. The wide variety of speech among American Indian groups must never be forgotten, for it poses difficulties for the translators and transcribers of oral literature.

Materially and nonmaterially the descendants of the Asian migrants improved on many ancestral importations. Knowledge was expanded and elaborated from the original traits. Economic surpluses accumulated in some areas, notably those in which people practiced horticulture, to allow the luxuries of priesthoods, scholars, and artists, whom the rest of the people maintained.

It is probably by no accident of history that Angkor-Wat, the great city-states of Europe, and Canton, Foochong, and other Chinese cities rose to power in the same centuries--900-1100 A.D. The founding of the great American Indian theocratic dictatorships, with their huge cities and widespread influence over whole subcontinents, occurred in Mexico, in Middle America, and in Peru at the same time period that cities rose to power on other continents.

Somewhere in the air, it almost seems, was an impulse that led men all around the globe to build monuments to themselves in the form of cities of carved stone. It was only when the high civilizations of the New World had reached their florescence and had begun to decline of their own weight that recorded and recording Europeans first encountered and overthrew them.

Beyond the great centers of American Indian civilizations there stretched the hinterlands, what anthropologists like to call "areas of peripheral or marginal cultures." This technical nomenclature is based on the fact that as a culture trait spreads from its point of origin it changes, diminishes, and finally merges with another trait or traits. Its original identity and entity finally are lost. The trait eventually becomes so greatly altered that it can be identified with its point of origin only by intensive research. So with myths and legends, as well as with material culture traits.

In 1498 John and Sebastian Cabot, citizens of Venice who sailed under letters patent issued by Henry VII of England, landed on and explored the Newfoundland coast. Henry, believing that Columbus had reached Asia, commissioned the Cabots to find a northern water route to that continent, to bypass the southern Atlantic route presumably opened for Spain. The Cabots recorded the presence of "red men" on the coast and farther inland, but made no attempt at conquest or colonization. In the sense that the Cabots failed to find the hoped-for northwest passage, their voyage was a failure, but it did serve to give England some claim to North America.

Mexico fell to Hernando Cortes in 1521. The Inca empire of Peru surrendered to Francisco Pizarro in 1526. In each case the conquistadores dealt with centralized, unified governments, which had already subdued and consolidated minor ethnic groups. A firm base for Spanish operations in the northern subcontinent had been established at the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan, now Mexico City.

In 1534 Jacques Cartier, again looking for a northwest passage to the Indies, landed at the mouth of the Saint Lawrence River. Cartier reported to Francis I of France that although he had failed to locate the longed-for shortcut, he had found a country that was rich and fertile, animals with fine pelts, and natives who were willing to trade. He recommended that a colony be established there, as it was, in 1536.

In 1539 De Soto invaded the Floridas, and in the following year Coronado entered the Southwest. These were both strictly military expeditions, of exploration and, if necessary, of conquest. Both faced enormous problems of distance and communication which, in the end, defeated De Soto. Coronado returned to report that the country to the north was poor in mineral wealth, but that it could be colonized by farmers. In 1598 Oñate established the first Spanish capital at the junction of the Chama and Rio Grande rivers, and set his colonists to work on the land.

Whatever their nationalities, the first Europeans had a common language in Latin. They had writing in that tongue and in their own several languages, and the urge to write. Even when they wrote of their own activities, they could not omit mention of the natives of the country.

In different ways, the Indian cultures the Spaniards encountered in both the Southeast and the Southwest were marginal to the great Mayan and Aztec cultures of Mexico. They probably embody the return migrations from south to north which have already been mentioned. This is particularly clear-cut in the Southeast. Art forms, clothing and ornaments, an emphasis on the value of pearls and other semiprecious stones, with some knowledge of the working of copper into ornaments, characterized the Indians of the farm towns De Soto observed from the Gulf of Mexico to the Mississippi.

In New Mexico and Arizona the Indians cultivated maize of different types from those grown in Mexico and the Southeast. These Indians used much native turquoise, and sent expeditions to the Gulf of California to bring back shells to be worked into ornaments. Houses were built of puddled adobe or of stone. In both areas houses and town plans closely resembled those of the Aztec cities.

Probably the horticultural population of the Southwest had entered their area at an earlier period than their fellow farmers in the Southeast. Data on both migrations are still accumulating, and there still is no positive answer as to which southern-influenced culture was first developed.

As they were marginal materially, the first explored areas were also marginal to the religion, legends, and folklore of central Mexico. Temples in the Southeast were built on earth mounds instead of on stone pyramids, and houses were of locally available wattle-and-daub construction materials instead of stone, for instance. In the Southwest, temples had disappeared, to be replaced by kivas, underground places of worship.

In both areas a pantheon so elaborate that only professional theologians could understand or explain it had been simplified into an over-all abiding power of good, matched by an equally strong power of evil. Both supernatural beings worked through a multitude of nature spirits, some of them guardians of man, some of them inimical to him. A system of astronomy based on solar and lunar observations and highly developed mathematics had slipped into simple observations of the solstices and the equinoxes.

Firmly binding together the earliest Europeans to settle the New World was a single faith. Spaniards and Frenchmen were alike Roman Catholics. The Reformation had begun in Europe, but these men were of the Roman Catholic Church. The auto-da-fé and the Inquisition were part of the daily life of Spain. Some French explorer-soldier-colonists had fought against the Protestants in the Netherlands and the Huguenots at home.

The chaplains traveled with the armies or settled with the colonists, and they, too, wrote their accounts of conquest, of the overcoming of devils and putting to death of stubborn heathen who adhered to their old pagan beliefs in the face of the preaching of the word of the God of peace.

The French priests were less totalitarian and more realistic in their dealings with the Indians than were the Spanish. The priests who accompanied Cartier, La Salle, and Joliet were men of considerable physical strength and endurance, who had been especially trained to reinforce their strengthening faith by physically facing frontier hardships before they left France.

These French priests preached, in general, a loving God. They baptized the Indians without arguing with them, and, so long as "pagan rites" were not held in public and so forced on their attention, the Frenchmen usually did not create crises.

Throughout French Canada, around the Great Lakes, and down the Mississippi, wherever French soldiers and *voyageurs* took their canoes, for the French were water-borne as were the Indians they met, the explorers met and married Indian women. There were large families of mixed blood in New France before the beginning of the eighteenth century, many of them comprised of men and women of high intelligence and ability. It was not necessary to destroy in order to overcome, in the French colonization philosophy. The whole process could be accomplished efficiently by letting nature take its course. And the part-French children were naturally raised in the Catholic Church, and just as naturally paid little or no attention to the "fairy stories" told them by their Indian mothers and grandmothers.

But in the Southwest the military chaplains ruled with an iron hand. Whole villages were baptized en masse, lest the population should continue as *gentes sin raison*--people without minds or souls. The Spanish policy demanded that they be given souls in the Spanish sense, whether the Indians wanted souls or not. At the same time, the Indians were given Spanish names which were to supersede their Tewa, Piro, Keres, or Hopi ones. A new God had been introduced, and his precepts were to be mercilessly followed, even to the extent of blotting out the native names of towns with the names of saints.

At Acoma Pueblo, situated on the top of a five-hundred-foot mesa and drawing its water supply from natural rock cisterns, Indian women climbed paths that were no more than toe holds, carrying baskets of earth and jars of water on their heads, until the Church of St. Stephen, one of the largest adobe structures in the Southwest, stood proudly against the sky. A filled-in earth graveyard with an adobe wall, adorned with effigies of helmeted heads, fronted the church on the flat rock of the mesa top. How many of those laboring women, one wonders, were among the first to lay their weary bones in the earth the padres had commanded them to carry?

Formerly the Pueblos had been theocratic. The cacique and his assistants controlled the lives of the people. The effect of Spanish conquest was not to destroy the native government and religion, as the French had done by attrition, but to drive them underground. The religion and government of the village Indians certainly did not disappear from the earth.

In 1958 the governor of a Rio Grande pueblo was explaining one of his paintings to the Roman Catholic archbishop who had honored the village with a pontifical High Mass.

"What does the symbol in the corner represent?" the churchman inquired.

"Your Excellency, that is the Moon God we worship," was the bland reply.

Not all of the southwestern village Indians were so adaptable as the Tewas and Keres had been in the beginning. At Awatobi and Oraibi the Hopis simply dropped the Spanish priests over the mesa cliffs. At Zuni the priests were crucified head down, and the church was destroyed. These priests certainly were as brave and hardy as the French, and they suffered for their faith.

In 1680 all the Rio Grande Pueblos, under the leadership of Popé, a native of San Juan who had located his base of operations at Taos, rose in concerted rebellion and drove the Spaniards back into Mexico. In 1692, under Francisco de Vargas, the Spaniards reconquered New Mexico. The Indians were subdued there once and for all.

Myths and legends, in the Indian phrase, went underground, into the kivas. The great myths were still known and taught, but only the "little stories," the how and why tales, were told out loud. To all appearances the eastern villages of the Southwest had become and remained Catholic.

The marauding Navahos and Apaches, Athabascan-speaking tribes who had come out of the Northwest into the Southwest in the thirteenth century, were less affected by the Spanish invasion, at first, than were the villagers. These peoples were drifting and remote; there was apparently nothing in the desert and mountain country they occupied that anybody else could possibly want at that time. So the Athabascans continued to hold their night- and day-long healing ceremonials, each of which required the recital of myths and the singing of hymns, without interruption. Athabascan culture was influenced by Spanish horses, burros, and sheep, but not by religion. This explains why so much more of Athabascan than of other Indian religion, ritual, and mythology has survived to this day.

Englishmen finally settled on the Virginia coast in 1607. They were landless younger sons in the main, ambitiously searching for the property denied them in their homeland, and they were of the Church of England. The English were far less set on missionary work among the southeastern tribes than were the Spaniards or the French in their areas.

The English policy toward the southeastern Indians was simply to move them aside and occupy their property. If the "red men" objected to moving, that was unfortunate, but the misfortune could be overcome with guns and gunpowder. A simple policy of elimination predominated; when the Indians would not eliminate themselves by transfer, the English obligingly did it for them with superior weapons.

The English colonists of the next wave, in the Northeast, did not even attempt elimination by moving. The Pilgrim fathers were glad of the assistance and food given them by the Narragansets when the first colonists landed in Massachusetts. Their relations with the Indians remained tolerant for several years, although William Bradford foreshadowed the future when he found himself "sorely put to know what these heathen people did in Truth believe, that they should cling to it."

Later the Puritans, bent on purifying the already rigid Protestantism of the Pilgrim fathers, set in action a "convert or fight" program of their own. Cotton Mather was not a man who hesitated to press those accused of witchcraft to death between stone slabs, or to hang convicted witches on village commons. He and his adherents could not be expected to treat the Indians with any greater kindness and tolerance than they did those members of their own society who displeased them.

Even in Quaker Pennsylvania, the gentler Friends gave up the effort to "convert the heathen" through their own love of humanity and sweet reasonableness. Here the Englishmen made treaties with the Indians, and then occupied their land. The Indians could move away or farm like Englishmen. Most of the Delawares chose the former course.

The effect of settlement on Indian religions was the same everywhere in the English colonies. The Englishmen admired the practicality of the log structure of Iroquois long houses. That there might be a religious purpose behind the long-house construction, or that the building might mean more than physical shelter to its occupants, escaped the English. All of Iroquoian social and religious life centered in the long house, but the building was dwelling place as well as place of worship.

As with the flint-and-steel firelighters, the guns and gunpowder, and the metal axes the English had brought with them, all of which the Indians readily adopted, the materially superior trait was accepted by the invaders. Log houses and cabins became the favorite habitations of English-descended frontiersmen.

New religions arose among the eastern tribes, particularly among the Algonkians and Iroquois, blending with and succeeding one another, and impartially incorporating elements of Christianity. To the south of the Ohio River the Caddoan Pawnees and the Siouan Osages and Omahas were fortunate in preserving their world views and beliefs almost intact into the twentieth century. These groups *were on the remote western* frontier of the French and English lands, the equally remote eastern frontier of the Spanish possessions.

The middle Mississippi tribes, in early years, had far less direct contact with Europeans than the groups surrounding them. They could preserve their sacred myths longer than Indians in other areas.

There was another trait besides writing and Christianity that all Europeans --Spanish, French, English or other--had in common. They all believed in land as *property to be owned.* A man's worth and wealth could be counted with the acres he controlled. The land was a European's individual property. He owned it. He could buy it and sell it. He could give or bequeath it to his children, and they in turn to theirs.

This European landownership concept was so strange to all the Indians that it was literally incomprehensible. The land was *there*, they said, and that was what mattered. Each tribe or village knew the boundaries of its corn fields and hunting territories. But the Indians knew the boundaries as defining the space they themselves used from that which their neighbors needed. Boundaries between Indian nations were not fences around jealously-held private lands.

Ruth Benedict expressed the matter most clearly in her *Counters in the Game*: "Land? What use was more land than would feed him to any man? If these white-faced strangers wanted land and nothing else, let it be given to them."

The point of separation of the two land concepts was precisely that the Europeans *did* want more land than would feed them. Behind them, as they sailed westward or struggled northward, they had left a continent already so overcrowded that it could not feed its exploding populations. Land, and more land, they wanted.

When the colonists of the eastern seaboard rose against the English government, the new United States filled with white men's towns and swarmed with the people who were descended from the earlier Europeans or were newcomers from over the seas. The space between the Atlantic seaboard and the Mississippi River was rapidly filling. The new United States adopted a ruthless Indian policy: removal, enclosure, or extermination of the no-good red devils.

Westward pressure from the emigrants pushed Indian groups always farther inland and always closer together. Quarrels over occupied and invaded hunting lands grew into tribal wars. The white men encouraged the divisions between Indian groups and within the group structures.

Additionally, each European ethnic group had its quarrels with others, and had brought these disagreements to the New World with them. Wars in North America had inevitably repeated Old World struggles. Whites enlisted allies on either side by deliberately pitting tribe against tribe. Division and conquest were accomplished simultaneously.

The coastal Algonkians moved inland from the Atlantic, up the westward flowing rivers, for they were accustomed to using canoes, and water routes were their preferred ways.

Ultimately, the Delawares and Micmacs reached the Great Lakes. Some bands remained there and made common cause with the Algonkian-speaking Ojibway, Pottawatomie, Sauk, Fox, and Kickapoo, and with the Siouan-speaking Santee and Winnebago. While other bands moved on, the Great Lakes Algonkians and Siouans merged their cultures in a blend that anthropologists today have a hard time separating into its original components. As happened elsewhere, a lingua franca between disparate linguistic stocks was formed.

On the Gulf coast, the Muskoghean-speaking Choctaws acquired horses from the English settlers before 1702. The French explorer Bienville in that year spoke of the hoof beats of Choctaw ponies, trotting along the riverside trails which these natural and international traders followed to the north and west, taking with them Mobilian, which language tribes unrelated to Muskoghean speakers could comprehend.

Stallions and mules had come into the southwest with Coronado and his army. Oñate's later colonists brought brood mares, and bred horses as they did cattle and sheep. Indians acquired the offspring of Spanish horse-breeding by stealth rather than by trade. Descendants of the Spanish herds, straying from their original or acquisitive owners onto the open grasslands at the heart of the continent, actually created the Plains Indian culture of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Once the inland Indians had horses there occurred an explosion from the horticultural-hunting villages of the Mississippi drainage, as far west as the headwaters of the Arkansas and Canadian rivers. Mounted Indians invaded the inland ocean of the plains, across which herds of buffalo drifted and grazed like schools of whales.

Once the buffalo had had to be hunted singly and by stealth, or driven in masses over cliffs, to dash themselves to a struggling pulp on the rocks below. Now, Indian hunters on horseback could ride into the buffalo herds, select the best animals, and kill them with arrows or lances. For a time, as the Cheyenne and Arapaho, the Brule, Miniconju, Hunkpapa, Oglala and other Dakotas, the Kiowas and Comanches, and the Osages, Otos, Poncas, and Pawnees took to the plains, the pressure against the northern and central tribes was eased and those groups could shift westward.

White pressure was soon felt again, as it covered a mappable hundred miles each ten years. Tribe was pushed against tribe, with resulting outbreaks of hostility between them. Some Indian groups were exterminated; some merged for protection with other, stronger tribes. And still other Indian tribes, downfacing all enemies, have maintained their identities to the present day.

Whatever the survival capacity and tenacity of the Indians themselves during the period of expansion, no one but the Indians paid any attention to Indian religion, art, music, drama, or poetry except to decry it as pagan and primitive. White men created a Bureau of Indian Affairs, to "protect" the Indians. At the same time, white men continued to urge the Indians to throw the old ways aside, and to replace them with the faiths and skills of the Euro-Americans. The nonmaterial culture traits of the invaders, because they *were* of European origin, must be as superior to those of the aboriginies as the wheel-based Euro-American culture was mechanically to the pole-and-lever engineering of the Indians.

Time passed, hurrying through the shortening centuries. Much Indian knowledge and literature was lost and gone forever. Then, suddenly, there was a stirring among the intellectuals in the cities and universities of the eastern United States. Curiosity about the Indians was aroused.

For the first time, in the 1830s, scholars realized that these Indians were *people*. They were human beings. Surely the Indians must have belief and knowledge, as other peoples had. The too-well-named brothers Grimm in Germany, Hauff in Austria, and Perrault in France were recording the lore and customs of the peasants of their own countries. Hans Christian Andersen was assembling for the world the folk tales of the Danes. Perhaps there were New World parallels for these collections.

Such men as the Philadelphia miniaturist George Catlin, the administrator Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, the lawyer Lewis Henry Morgan, and the journalist Washington Irving traveled west. Sprigs of English and Continental aristocracy included the western United States in their *grands tours*, bringing their staff artists with them. These men set down their observations of the Indians' customs and habits in words and pictures. Their records are invaluable to present-day scholars.

A new science, anthropology, conceived out of geology by philosophy, embraced the physical and nonphysical aspects of man. The subject was taught in European universities. Anthropology's westward spread was as inevitable to the knowledge-hungry of the New World as the spread of settlement had been to men hungry for new lands.

What we know now of Indian religions, of the myths they inspired and of the legends the Indians created around their semihistorical heroes, is fragmentary at best. The material was first recorded by men of intellectual curiosity because it *was* curious. Much that seemed to them everyday and ordinary, the repetitious round of daily life of women, for instance, slipped by them unrecorded.

Later workers, Franz Boas, John Swanton, Truman Michelson, and Frank Speck among them, studied the languages in which the Indians' stories were told. These men recorded volume after notebook of tribal myths and legends, sometimes supplying literal textual translations of their informants' words.

Stith Thompson, in the early twentieth century, brought myths from many tribes together for study and comparison. Alfred Kroeber noted similarities between certain Asiatic and American Indian myth themes. Stephen Barrett commented on the resemblance of Machabo, the Great Hare of the Algonkian myths, to the Br'er Rabbit tales brought to the southern states by African Negro slaves.

All these scholars alike wrote primarily for their brother scholars. They were fast on the trail of vanishing knowledge. Record! Record! Record! was their cry. Time enough for detailed analysis, synthesis, and discussion of aesthetic qualities later.

As a result, while the field work of the early American professional anthropologists was superbly scholarly, it was often unreadable except by other anthropologists, or by a few folklorists who laboriously wound their way through the phonetic jungles, to arrive at last at the gist of some half-forgotten tale, told in bits and pieces by men and women grown too old to remember the myth's ramifications, entirety, or context. Much of what was recorded early in this century still remains in musty field notebooks, untranscribed.

It must be stated, too, that the field anthropologist is always at the mercy of his interpreters. Many informants whose English is adequate for story telling still insist on having their spokesmen. If this be a person familiar with the best of his own language and of English, or one who is fascinated by the *idea* of languages and their words, well and good. A satisfactory translation will result. But if he be someone who is indifferent to nuances of meanings; to whom words, as to Molière's character, are prose spoken all his life, then it is up to the field worker to fill in with comparative data, or to draw on his own knowledge of the mores of a given group.

Yet the great genius shared by all American Indians was and remains verbal and oral. Since the Indians lacked writing to record their philosophies and literatures, they played with the spoken word, combining and recombining phrases and thoughts.

North American Indians, wherever they lived, delivered orations, made the poems and music of songs, and created four-day-long miracle plays. Their two-hour-long ritual prayers had to be recited without an error or the omission of a single syllable, else the spell would not be cast, the ceremony would fail, and life-giving rain and snow, crops, or wild game herds would not come to the aid of men that season.

To sit in a tribal council meeting, even today, is to hear oratory, although it is as often delivered in English as in the speaker's ancestral language.

To endure through a long winter's night the solemn recitation of prayers and invocations to the gods at a Zuñi Shalako ceremony is to be impressed forever by the grace of men's speech, even though that speech be incomprehensible as words.

To watch and listen in a white canvas tipi while priests and people night long sing to Jesus and partake of the peyote sacrament is to know an enduring depth of religious feeling.

And to sit in the full blaze of an August sun on baking rocks, while Hopi priests move through the meeting and countermeeting of two groups of musicians in a Flute Ceremony, is to realize painfully our loss when this music cannot be and that of other groups has not been recorded.

From reconstructed fragments of auditory archaeology, then, the myths and legends that appear in this book have been compiled. Many of them appear as the original field work of the compilers. They were recorded in hospital wards, beside country kitchen wood stoves, in the swamps while gathering rushes to be plaited into mats, in our own living rooms, and at powwows.

In some cases the compilers have drawn on the published works of other anthropologists and when necessary have reworded literally-translated myths and legends into something that seems to them a nearer expression of the grace and beauty of the Indians' spoken words. The intention throughout the book is to present stories for what they are: a body of unwritten literature, but literature nonetheless.

Some concrete statements have emerged from the gleanings. The Indian world is divided by fours: four seasons, four divisions of a day or a life, and, above all, four World Corners--the cardinal or semicardinal directions. Certain type-characters are almost universally distributed among the American Indians north of Mexico. Among them are the Hero, the Trickster, the Trickster-Hero who brings together traits of each of the others, the Grandmother Spider, and her grandsons, the Twin War Gods.

The Culture Hero stands for the strength, wisdom, and perception of men. He is not the Power Above, but he is the intermediary between that Power and mankind. He protects women and children from harm; he sends power visions to youths; he steps between men and nature when no one else can.

The Trickster per se is used to explain natural phenomena, especially those from which a moral can be drawn. He makes trouble. He displays disagreeable traits, like greediness. He is often the central character in stories that are best termed ethno-pornography, and which are so gratuitously repetitious and detailed that they have been omitted from this volume. The Trickster is Eros plus Pan.

The Trickster-Hero has no precise European analogy. He is a cross between Til Eulenspiegl and Prometheus. Known under many names in many tribes, he sometimes does good intentionally, sometimes by accident. In his Trickster manifestation the Trickster-Hero deliberately wreaks mischief, havoc, and in extreme cases, chaos. In his heroic manifestation he defeats death, or brings food to the people.

Grandmother Spider is all of womankind, Eve and Lilith in one, old to begin with wherever we meet her although she is capable of transforming herself into a young and beautiful woman when she wishes. Spider Woman lives alone, or with her grandsons between their adventures. Grandmother Spider directs men's thoughts and destinies through her kindness and wise advice, or lures to the underworld those whose thoughts and actions seem to her profane.

The War Twins are harder to define than the other type-characters. Through them we perceive the duality basic to all men and all religions. The Twins are young, but they can suddenly become old. One is good and one is bad. The Hopis say that the Twins face each other from the north and south--"poles" is added today--and their balance keeps the world steady on its axis. The Twins are killers of enemies, and sometimes of enemy gods. They are the personification of action, not of contemplation. Always they are of supernatural parentage on at least one side, and often they are virgin-born.

Predominantly the War Twins are human. Their very humanity is their appeal and their puzzle. The War Twins brought safety and harmony into the world through their destruction of enemy gods, and are often described as homosexual, with as many female as male traits. Twin babies--or at least one of a pair of twins--in the past seldom survived the first twenty-four hours of life in certain Indian tribes. The duality of adult personalities must not be permitted to develop.

Beyond the type-characters and at the core of all North American Indian religions there is a complex spirit concept. Above and beyond all the powers of nature there is a Creator, a divine being who makes men out of the dust of the earth or the mud of lake or river bottoms. He is the One, the All-in-All, the Being who has been denominated by white men as the Great Spirit.

Under the Creator's direction and within His guidance are a host of other supernatural beings, all great, none supreme. Sun is father and Earth mother of us all. Exposure to the sun and contact with the earth bring strength and blessing. Winds, rain, clouds, thunder, and storms are Sun and Earth's means of communication with each other and with mankind. The importance of moon and stars seems to vary from tribe to tribe, although the variation may be due to the lacunae of time. Solstices, equinoxes, and eclipses never cease to arouse awe and wonder, and are to be regarded as the work of the many spirits.

Rivers and mountains, deserts and fields, stones and running water, animals and plants and human beings all are endowed with protective power in North American Indian beliefs. Sometimes the aid of the good spirits can be obtained through fasting, suffering, and prayer. Sometimes the blessing comes without a man's seeking it, as a revelation of his own innate power as an individual.

Power, the animating force of the universe, derives from the Creator and His helpers. There is no other English word which even partially conveys what most Indians mean when they say "Power." Perhaps "talent" or "genius," when the word is applied to an individual, most nearly approaches the meaning Indians give to the word Power.

In the world views of most North American Indians there are worlds beyond this one. Sometimes, as in the Pawnee cosmology, there are worlds outside the one that men live in, enclosing the human world within like the shell of a river mussel or the curve of an earth lodge. Sometimes we can discern a clearly stated concept of an after life, as in the Hopi belief in a valley below a lake where the good eternally rejoice, and which the wicked eternally strive to reach by crossing a thorn-strewn desert. In other mythologies the after-life concept seems to have been lost, if, indeed, it ever existed. The Kiowas are a case in point; the great appeal of Christianity to them was the rewarding of goodness; previously the Kiowas believed that only the wicked survived, in the form of owls.

Research and analysis of materials have convinced the compilers that myths and legends repeat from culture area to culture area and from tribe to tribe, varying principally with regional ecologies. Machabo, the Trickster-Hero of the Algonkians, is a woodland creature; Old Man Coyote of the Comanches is a Trickster-Hero of the western plains and mountains, for instance. If the stories that follow seem heavily weighted in the direction of certain tribes, it is because those are the tribes with whom the compilers have worked first hand, not because the same stories do not appear elsewhere.

Only by being read in the contexts of the societies in which they developed can the values of any myths be distinguished, whenever or wherever the myths occur. For this reason brief descriptions of the cultures have been included, with mention of tribal names, linguistic stocks, and the culture traits that at once link and separate geographical areas from each other.

Out of this collection of material the compilers hope that there will emerge a clearer understanding of the patterns of North American Indian religions and their mythologies, and of the philosophies which myths and legends embody. It will be incomplete. But let the stories be told as stories, beautiful in themselves, and in their relationships to the lives of the original tellers.

## *Assignment I

## HOUSE MADE OF DAWN

Reading Assignment: N. Scott Momaday, HOUSE MADE OF DAWN.

It is tension such as we discussed in the introduction, internalized in the life of the protagonist Abel, that provides the crux of the subject matter for HOUSE MADE OF DAWN. Reservation or white man's world--in which will Abel find his niche, or at least survive? Using Abel as a prototype of young Indians today, this book provides insight into a very real and tragic modern dilemma. This dilemma unfolds as Momaday places his protagonist in both worlds --first in the reservation community, then in the urban white man's world, and finally back on the reservation--so we can see the frustrations inherent in each.

In the first section of the book we meet Abel the Longhair at the pueblo of San Ysidro. Here Abel is an integral member of the reservation community, participating in its festivals and customs. Cared for by his grandfather Francisco, in whom strong remnants of the traditional Kiowa life style endure, he is strong and at one with nature. Lyrical nature imagery abounds. An intrusion from Outside comes in the tantalizing form of the white woman Angela. This phase of Abel's life begins as he returns from a debilitating stint in the Army, and ends abruptly as he murders the albino.

After an intervening six years of prison has elapsed, we find that well-meaning white Relocation officials have tried unsuccessfully to facilitate Abel's assimilation into urban Los Angeles. Tosamah, Priest of the Sun, has offered us hope that Abel can make the transition. His sermons and peyote trances articulate a seemingly successful combination of the reservation-past and the city-present. But, as Abel recalls in the lucid intervals during his delirium on the beach, Tosamah deliberately fails him.

Abel the Night Chanter has been an easy victim, a friend explains. Although Milly and Ben have offered sincere friendship, sympathy, and love, the alien ways of the white man's city are too much for Abel to handle. Despair and drunkenness have overcome him. Nor is he able to comprehend or cope with the brutality of the white policeman. Finally he stumbles back to Ben and is hospitalized. Then, broken in body and spirit, Abel whimpers home to the reservation, to the place where he and Ben had dreamed they would find the House Made of Dawn.

Shortly after Abel's arrival, Francisco dies, and Momaday leaves unanswered the questions we have about Abel's future. Our last sight of him is the same as our first, that of a fleet runner into the dawn.

As the story unfolds, Momaday utilizes flashbacks continually. Sometimes the time sequence seems disjointed as a result of his weakness in handling this technique, especially in the middle sections, in the white man's world. And the plot line is clearly subordinate to the general theme of Indian tragedy. That is why I have sketched the main sequence of events above. I would suggest that you refer during your reading to these paragraphs describing the book's organization if you become confused.

The author varies his method of presentation: Sometimes, as in Parts 1, 2, and 4, he uses an omniscient narrator (a teller who knows everything concerning this story); in the third part, he uses Ben as a character as well as the narrator. Frequently Momaday inserts letters, sermons, and poems into the narrative, along with the more traditional conversations, reminiscences, and descriptions; often these interjections are indicated by typographical changes (italics, indentations, etc.). Be sure to read everything, for each segment either advances the narrative or, more importantly, sometimes creates a mood or sets a tone.

If you are to appreciate this novel fully, you must try to involve more than your mind; let yourself feel, touch, and smell--as well as intellectualize--the scenes Momaday sets before you. Savor the imagery, especially the nature scenes, and the lyrical poetry of the language, which often has a characteristically Indian flavor to it. See if you can discover traces of the underlying Indian ethos in the lives of the characters.

Momaday has tried to portray some of the folklore, the customs, and the culture of his people. The eagle hunt, the festival where Abel and the albino confront each other, the grandmother's tales, and the burial customs are all parts of his portrait. The activities of Tosamah illustrate several facets of the Kiowa culture: 1. It centered around the sun and the Sun Dance. 2. Trances induced by the peyote button were common religious experiences of Plains Indians. 3. Oratory such as Tosamah's was a common mode of communication for Indians.

As you read, look for symbolism, which is plentiful. (A symbol may be defined as something that is itself and yet stands for or suggests or means something else.[1]) For example, the soaring eagle of the first section is a symbol for supreme control--here, the white man's America--pouncing on its prey, the rabbit--the helpless Abel and other Indians--and playing with the serpent--lightning and waters, or natural resources in general. Some symbols are recurring, others appear only once; some develop and add nuances of meaning, others remain stable. Some foreshadow events to come; others reinforce events that have already occurred or are occurring. Most of the symbols of this novel are taken from nature.

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[1] This and all succeeding literary definitions of this course are paraphrased from William Flint Thrall, Addison Hibbard, and C. Hugh Holman, A HANDBOOK TO LITERATURE (New York: Odyssey Press, 1960), p. 478.

Because Natachee Scott Momaday was raised on a Kiowa reservation, he can write with authority and insight about Indians today. He is one of only seventeen (at this writing) American Indian Ph.D.'s. While at Stanford University working toward his doctorate, he concentrated on the works of Emily Dickinson. At present he is a professor of English and Comparative Literature at Stanford University, where he teaches and writes poetry. Married and the father of three children, a devout Catholic, he is said to speak with a commanding eloquent voice.

Echoes of the grandmother-Kiowa tales from this novel are to be found in Momaday's later book, THE WAY TO RAINY MOUNTAIN, also in paperback. For that collection of tales, beautifully illustrated by his teacher-father, Momaday drew upon his own earlier limited-edition printing entitled JOURNEY OF TAI-ME.

The 1969 Pulitzer Prize was awarded to Momaday for HOUSE MADE OF DAWN.

You may have to work harder to fit together the pieces of this book than of some others you have read. Some of the difficulties are inherent in the writing. Probably some of the trouble also lies in the fact that it is difficult to capture in one short novel a way of living and thinking so alien to most of us. But, notwithstanding its weaknesses, this is a beautifully written book, full of sheer poetry, and certainly the best fictional presentation to date of the modern Indian's dilemma.

Writing Assignment:

Choose five of the following topics to answer in essay form. Answers consisting of one-half to two typewritten pages for topics here and in succeeding lessons are not only sufficient but also preferable.

1. HOUSE MADE OF DAWN concerns itself with two ways of life as experienced by Abel: reservation-Indian's and city-white man's. Choose two or three of the differences between the two ways of life and explore in depth these differences as portrayed in this book. Are these life styles mutually exclusive; that is, if you value one way of life, must you discard the other? Are they portrayed in terms of black and white, one always bad, one always good, or is there a gray area? Do you consider these differences important in the demise of Abel? Explain why you chose these particular differences to discuss (you may be subjective; answer in terms of your own value system).

2. Read the account of the Biblical Abel in Genesis 4:2-15. Why is he a fitting prototype for the Abel of HOUSE MADE OF DAWN? In what ways is Momaday's

Abel victimized? Are there any instances in which the consequences accrue directly as a result of actions or decisions taken by Abel? Since the modern Abel commits a murder instead of being murdered by a Cain, is this use of the name invalidated? Do you ever feel that Abel doesn't try, that he almost seeks to be preyed upon? What might be the reasons for this? Use specific instances to support your positions (for example, Abel's seeking the white policeman).

3. Many of the animals portrayed are victims and as such are reinforcing symbols for Abel. For example, rabbits are struck dead by members of the Eagle Watcher's Society to be used as bait for the eagle, whose talons split open the jack rabbit's underbelly. Clearly, the rabbit could be compared to Abel, a victim of white society. Find other examples and write about them.

4. Do you feel you know Abel, or do you just know about him? Is he so much a symbol that he never becomes a person? Can you empathize with him in the same way you can with well-rounded fictional characters? Do you think Momaday intended you to feel remote from the action of the novel, an outsider looking in but never getting involved? What, if anything, might be accomplished by that? In Section 2, Tosamah discusses words; one implication here is that the white man is excessively verbal, the Indian taciturn. How might this influence the characterization? What literary techniques does Momaday use to try to enhance the characterization of Abel?

5. Francisco is portrayed quite touchingly; moreover, it is through him that we learn much about the Indian ethos. Write a character sketch of him, taking into account such topics as his relationship to Christianity and to the bear, his genealogy, and his feelings at the various junctures of Abel's life.

6. The title, HOUSE MADE OF DAWN, is itself a major symbol. What does it symbolize? What events occur at dawn? How are they related to each other, and how do they reinforce the symbol? Does the fact that this symbol emerges strongest at the end indicate optimism for Abel's future?

7. Through the character and actions of the three priests and their relationship to the Indian community, Momaday seems to be saying something about Christian missionary activity among the Indians. What is it? Evaluate each priest: Francisco's consumptive priest; Father Olguin, on the reservation at the time of the events of our novel; and especially Tosamah, "Pastor and Priest of the Sun." Note their reactions to events (for example, Father Olguin's reaction to news of Francisco's death and the Indian burial customs being performed before his arrival).

8. Write about Angela and Milly as they relate to Abel. Might Angela's name be significant? How do you interpret her appearance at Abel's bedside in the hospital? Milly, too, was a victim of society. Why couldn't her genuine concern for Abel "rehabilitate" him? Did Angela and Milly behave responsibly toward Abel, and he toward them?

9. Since Abel's murder of the albino is a turning point in Abel's life as well as in the novel, it is important for Momaday to make that murder convincing, credible. Does he? Do the encounters between the two young men provide enough motivation for Abel to kill? Was the killing premeditated? Does it matter?

Does this murder interfere with your empathy for Abel? Does it offend your sensibilities? If you were editing this novel, what other act might you suggest that would fulfill all the same functions and yet not have the disadvantages of the one Momaday chose?

Does the fact that he kills an albino indicate antipathy toward white people? Are there other symbols and examples of anti-white feeling? If so, what are they? What evidence is there that reverse racial prejudice is not involved?

10. Many people find the ending to this novel pessimistic, depressing. Do you? Or do you interpret the ending optimistically, in the sense that Abel has "found himself?" Is the realization, painfully achieved, that he is too rooted in the Indian ethos to leave it a step toward fulfillment? If this is so, what of Abel's future? Is there a place for him on the reservation where he can preserve his self-respect? Or will he have to return to the white man's world? Will he become one of the statistics listed earlier? Is he doomed? In your discussion, take into account the symbolism of running.

## ASSIGNMENT II

## THE MAGIC WORLD

Reading Assignment: William Brandon, ed., THE MAGIC WORLD.

"Prose is the medium of communication, but Poetry is the mode of communion."[1] This is especially true of American Indian poetry, not only in the sense of sharing emotion but especially of being in communion with one's fellow humans, one's animal friends, the spirits--indeed, with the entire universe. The Indian led an "integrated" life--that is, all facets of his life were intertwined--and poetry was in turn an essential part of that life. You might say that an Indian often used poetry to achieve a "high," to elevate himself until he felt in communion with the all-pervasive cosmos.

When we speak of the poetry of the American Indian, we are not speaking of poetry in the narrow definition we give the term today, that is, a medium dealing only with words; but, rather, it also involves dance, and singing or chanting. The three--movement, melody, and words--are entwined so closely that it is impossible to separate them. In addition, accompanying the dance movements are often flutes and rhythm instruments of many sorts: gourds, shells, animal hoofs, as well as several kinds of drums. The effect is often heightened by visual stimuli: painted bodies and faces, costumes. Often dramatic acts are an integral part of a poem. For example, young men of Taos rendering the Moon Song rise to stand in a row as if on the bridge between the summer and winter houses, facing in that quarter from which the mistress of the night sky issues.[2] When we speak of American Indian poetry, then, we speak of the synthesis of many arts not usually associated with words in the white culture; we shall use the term poetry in its broad definition hereafter in this study.

Poetry in the life of the Indian had a much more important function than we accord it in our lives today. Hardly a day passed without his using poems, and certainly no special occasion was celebrated without poetry. Shamen and medicine men would repeat incantations to work themselves into trances so they could heal their clients. An integral part of the planning of a battle was the war dance to prepare the warriors. Wives would gather around the chief's wife to sing war songs, praying for the safe return of their husbands. Celebrations after battles and counting coup also involved poetry. Likewise, it was usual for a tribe to break into singing before, during, and after a hunt. There were crop songs, ceremonies to encourage the growth of, say, corn, and work songs to accompany the planting, harvesting, and grinding of that corn. The Sun Dance is the focal ceremony of the year for many tribes. The aid of the powers of rain, thunder, clouds--all of nature, in fact--has been invoked in poems. Some poems come as revelations from the dead; some accompany offerings to the spirits. Death Songs are numerous. In addition to the tribal poetry, each person might have his own private or family poetry. For example, a husband and wife absent from each other might perform a prearranged dance at a certain time each day as a means of communication with each other's spirits.

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[1] Mary Austin, THE AMERICAN RHYTHM (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1930), p. 23.
[2] Austin, AMERICAN RHYTHM, p. 59.

Many of these poems and ceremonies lasted for days. Sometimes they allowed for much freedom of improvisation; on other occasions, they were rigidly prescribed rituals. Some Zuni ceremonies, for instance, lasted hours, and each syllable had to be remembered exactly in order for the desired spell to be cast.

As Marriott and Rachlin point out, Indian poetry is part of an oral tradition, rather than written. That is, tribal members would orally pass on the poems to the young, but seldom were the poems written down until white people transcribed some of them. This means that poems and songs were embellished and modified by each successive interpreter. As with any oral literature, what we have now may or may not be close to the original. Also, much has been lost. Often old people died and carried their songs with them to their graves. It is probable that the best poetry is lost to us because of the stamping out of superior Indian tribes.[3]

The problems of the translator-interpreter of Indian poetry are numerous. It is always difficult, some say impossible, to render well a poem in a language other than the original. One has to choose whether to give a literal or figurative interpretation of the poem, whether to capture the essence or the particulars, whether to reproduce as faithfully as possible the versification (rhyme scheme, rhythm pattern, etc.) or the meaning. In selecting for emphasis any one of these--for example, the original rhythm pattern--one must of necessity do some injustice to the others. Then too, cultural differences are so much reflected in language that finding an exact word equivalent is sometimes impossible. One Indian translator, for example, bemoaned the paucity of English words expressing the different kinds of love.

In addition to these problems normally present for translators of poetry, when dealing with Indian poetry we have the additional complicating factors of its oral nature and the fact that other arts are inextricably meshed with the verbal forms. To fully appreciate Indian poetry, you must see and hear it, not read it. To make any kind of meaningful transition to the printed page, the translator ought to review several versions of words, dance, and song before deciding which one or ones are most authentic or best serve his purposes. Then he must decide how to represent movement on the printed page and how to replicate the melody of the chanter or singer. In his introduction to THE MAGIC WORLD, William Brandon tells you which paths he chose in preparing his selections. The typography is beautifully handled; Brandon tries to capture much of the movement and melody through the way the poem is arranged on the page--and often succeeds, I think, although he sacrifices some authenticity of words. Also, he eliminates much repetition from the original.

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[3] Mary Austin, Introduction to PATH ON THE RAINBOW by George W. Cronyn (New York: Liveright, 1934), p. xxviii.

Almost any poetry contains several layers of meaning; sometimes this means you must work harder to get the full meaning and feeling from a poem than from a piece of prose. This is even more true of Indian poetry. Sometimes it is so concise as to appear cryptic. For example, a song may tell only of the climax of a buffalo hunt; the rest of the hunt would be filled in by the mind's eye. An Indian might dance with tears in his eyes, not just because of the words of his song but because of what those words evoked in his memory. The "outside song" becomes a kind of shorthand to the "inside song," which is all important.

There is much that is affirmative in this poetry. Even the songs to heal the sick emphasize health rather than disease. A typical death song is this simple one:

All my life
  I have been seeking,
  Seeking![4]

Humor is not lacking. Poetry became a vehicle for fun, play, and fantasy, as well as for worship, arousal, or many other purposes. Much of the humor is earthy or sexual.

Most of the symbols used in Indian mythology also appear in the poetry, so study carefully the section on symbolism in the essay by Marriott and Rachlin. Imagery is rich and varied. It usually relies on the senses for heightened effects. Sometimes one image is compared with another.

The predominant characteristic of the structure of this poetry is repetition. This is just what you might expect when you consider the circumstances of much Indian poetry: a corn-grinding song, for example, is meant to lighten the burden of the worker repeating the grinding motions with her metate. Repetitions may serve to gather momentum, to designate different steps in a ceremony, or to raise levels of awareness, as in religious rituals. The number of repetitions has significance, with four being most often the magical number, as pointed out by Marriott and Rachlin. Repetition of a refrain may occur after each episode in a storytelling poem. Repetition of a single syllable or string of syllables may be used to create a feeling. Occasionally there is thought, rather than word, repetition (the technical term for this is parallelism). Although merely reading these repetitions may seem monotonous to you, remember it was not so to the Indian. Often a chanter would recite or chant each repetition at a different pitch or use an ascending or descending pattern for each line. Dancers could vary their steps while using the same words or repeating the same motions. In general, the uses of repetition are quite varied and often brilliantly executed.

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[4] Mary Austin, PATH ON THE RAINBOW, p. xxii.

Occasionally there is end-rhyme, internal rhyme, regular metrical pattern, regular stanzaic structure, the use of onomatopoeia, assonantal tonality, and other versification techniques common to much poetry. But for the most part, these artifices, which appear rarely in the originals, are not evident in the translations you have in Brandon's book. He was searching, as he said, for the beauty in meaning. He has done a creditable job of capturing that.

Writing Assignment: Answer five of the following nine questions.

1. Choose any poem that intrigues you, pretend you are the Indian performer, and imagine the "inside story," the performer's inner thoughts that would accompany this poem. Write down these inner thoughts interspersed with the text of the poem.

2. Find four poems that utilize the mystical number four in different ways. What does four signify in each poem?

3. Choose two poems rich in symbolism and work out the symbols of each, using Marriott and Rachlin as a reference plus your own ideas. How does an understanding of the symbolism enrich the meaning of the poem?

4. Analyze for repetition the Pima Hunting Song on page 40. What different kinds of repetition are used? What effect does each have? How are the repetitions varied? How do they fit the action of the poem?

5. and 6. (You may do one poem, or two; each poem will count as one answer.) Choose one (or two) poems from the following list to analyze according to all that you have learned about Indian poetry. Include the occasion, meaning, symbolism, repetition, etc.; imagine the movement and melody and the inner story that might accompany it.

Fragment from "Maya Song," page 5
Navajo "Toad Man's Song from the Beauty Way," page 59
Fragment from "Qee'esh Calendar," page 131
Pawnee "Buffalo Dance Song," page 72
Delaware, from the "Walum Olum," page 100
Omaha Fragment from "The Rock," page 83
Ojibwa "Firefly Song," page 97

7. List ten examples of occasional songs. Tell for what occasion each poem would have been used.

8. Find at least three poems using some form of the Trickster, the Hero, or the Trickster-Hero. State what he does and what his function is in each poem.

9. Find at least three examples of poems using some form of Grandmother Spider or the Twins. For each poem state what they do, what they symbolize, and how they affect the environment or people around them.

## ASSIGNMENT III

## BLACK ELK SPEAKS

Reading Assignment: John G. Neihardt, BLACK ELK SPEAKS.

One way to find out about a culture is to read the reminiscences of one man or woman who participated in it. Many such accounts of the lives of Indians have been published during the last fifty years. (Titles of several are given in the Supplemental Reading List following this assignment.) Invariably these reminiscences are related by an old man or woman who has been persuaded to tell the story of his life and the ways of his people to some sympathetic white person, usually one trained as an anthropologist or writer. The teller draws upon his memory and unfolds his story as he remembers it. In the course of many weeks, after pages of anecdotes taken down in notes have been transcribed, the writer begins the process of sifting and sorting, cutting out the repetitious and trivial, arranging the material chronologically, and finally writing a coherent account as true to the spirit of the teller as he can make it. The reader of such an account gets a picture of history and culture from the personal point of view of the teller.

Such a book is BLACK ELK SPEAKS. Black Elk recalls for you the outstanding events of his lifetime, from recollections of earliest childhood to those of his somewhat embittered old age. Along with the story of this person, interspersed with his visions, is the story of a dying culture, the fading out of much of what his tribe held dear. It is a straight-forward narrative, easy to understand, and so will need little introduction.

If you are interested in this period in Indian history, read BURY MY HEART AT WOUNDED KNEE, by Dee Brown, and INDIANS, by Arthur Kopit, about some of the same events as those of BLACK ELK SPEAKS.

One footnote to this narrative occurs in an updated epilogue about Black Elk's descendants:

March, 1972, saw an uprising by Indians on the Pine Ridge reservation of South Dakota and Nebraska. The spark that ignited the protests was the humiliation by whites and killing of Raymond Yellow Thunder, a 51-year-old Oglala Sioux. Adding fuel to this fire were the economic facts: "45 per cent of the reservation people are unemployed and another 15 per cent underemployed. The Pine Ridge Reservation has 11,000 Indian residents. A moccasin factory employs about 150, and many of the others who have jobs work for the BIA. The average income of the reservation is about $1,900 a family per year. Federal programs spend about $8,900 per family per year, but administration and regulations gobble that up."[1]

Writing Assignment: Answer five of the following ten questions.

1. Judging from what you are told about the Oglala Sioux society before the coming of the Wasichus, what is there about it that appealed to you most? What things did you dislike about this life style?

2. Analyze the symbolism of Black Elk's first vision, using the Marriott and Rachlin material to help you. What natural causes might have induced this vision? What elements in succeeding visions reinforced the meanings of the first?

3. Trace the symbol of the nation's hoop through Black Elk's narrative, noting the state of the nation and the hoop each time it is mentioned.

4. In what ways does Black Elk convey the idea of tribal loyalty, of communality rather than individuality? How does this affect the Sioux perspective of death? Compare and contrast this view with that of the white world as you know it.

5. List chronologically the promises that the Wasichus broke and the incidents when they were unfair, according to our narrator. Did the Wasichus ever act honorably in the story?

6. Poetical descriptions of the names of the months exemplify the rich language of many tribes. What were the names of each of the months, according to Black Elk?

7. If you chose to do the assignment on THE MAGIC WORLD, apply what you learned about poetry to some of the poems contained here. What role did poetry play in Black Elk's life and that of his tribe? What were some of the occasions that elicited poetry? What other media were combined with the use of words? Analyze one of the poems contained here according to what you learned in Assignment II.

8. If you have read or seen the play INDIANS by Arthur Kopit, compare Black Elk's description of his stint with Pahuska's (Buffalo Bill's) traveling show with Kopit's portrayal. What were the feelings elicited in you by the description of the same phenomenon in each work? What other comparisons and contrasts can you make between the two works, which essentially deal with the same time in history?

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[1] Associated Press release, LAWRENCE (Kansas) DAILY JOURNAL-WORLD, 15 March 1972, p. 21, cols. 1, 2, 3.

9. Did Black Elk use the power from his vision as much as you had expected him to? What are his own feelings toward his vision and the proper use of it? What hampered him from using it more?

10. In the U.S.A., we brag about our freedom of religion. Cite examples from this book that indicate that the Wasichus have actually denied this privilege to Indians. Cite other examples from the Marriott and Rachlin essay and from your own knowledge. What conclusions do you draw?

## Suggested Supplemental Reading: Native Americans

Literature about Indians written in the English language by Indians has been scarce. One reason for this is that their own languages were oral, not written. Another is that English until recently was a foreign language to them. They were also reluctant to publicize tribal customs and traditions, many of them secret for centuries, by submitting them to print for foreign eyes to see. Another reason was the stamping out, driving underground, or wearing down by attrition of much Indian culture by the whites. Recently, more good material by Indians has been published, particularly biographies and autobiographies. And there is an abundance of nonfiction written by scholars, with new titles appearing every day. The books listed below are some of the best available.

### Myths, Tales, Poetry, and Songs:

Astrov, Margot, ed., INDIAN PROSE AND POETRY: THE WINGED SERPENT.
Clark, Ella E., INDIAN LEGENDS FROM THE NORTHERN ROCKIES.
Cronyn, George W., ed., THE PATH ON THE RAINBOW.
Day, A. Grove, ed., THE SKY CLEARS: POETRY OF THE AMERICAN INDIANS.
de Angulo, Jaime, INDIAN TALES.
Feldmann, Susan, ed., THE STORYTELLING STONE.
Marriott, Alice, and Carol K. Rachlin, AMERICAN INDIAN MYTHOLOGY.
McLuhan, T. C., TOUCH THE EARTH.
Momaday, N. Scott, THE WAY TO RAINY MOUNTAIN.
Nequatewa, Edmund, TRUTH OF A HOPI.
Storm, Hyemeyohsts, SEVEN ARROWS.
Vizenor, Gerald, ed., ANISHINABE ADISOKAN: TALES OF THE PEOPLE.

### Autobiographies and Biographies:

Barrett, S. M., ed., GERONIMO.
Brant, Charles S., ed., JIM WHITEWOLF: LIFE OF A KIOWA APACHE INDIAN.
Dyk, Walter, recorder, SON OF OLD MAN HAT: A NAVAJO AUTOBIOGRAPHY.
Linderman, Frank B., PLENTY-COUPS: CHIEF OF THE CROWS.
Lurie, Nancy, ed., MOUNTAIN WOLF WOMAN, SISTER OF CRASHING THUNDER: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A WINNEBAGO INDIAN.
Nabokov, Peter, TWO LEGGINGS.
Sandoz, Mari, CRAZY HORSE.
Simmons, Leo W., ed., SUN CHIEF: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A HOPI INDIAN.

## Drama:

Kopit, Arthur, INDIANS.

## Novels:

Berger, Thomas, LITTLE BIG MAN.
Borland, Hal, WHEN THE LEGENDS DIE.
Corle, Edwin, FIG TREE JOHN.
Eastlake, William, 3 by EASTLAKE: THE EARLY FICTION--PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST WITH 26 HORSES, GO IN BEAUTY, THE BRONC PEOPLE.

## Nonfiction:

Armstrong, Virginia Irving, I HAVE SPOKEN: AMERICAN HISTORY THROUGH THE VOICES OF THE INDIANS.
Brown, Dee, BURY MY HEART AT WOUNDED KNEE.
Cahe, Edgar, OUR BROTHER'S KEEPER: THE INDIAN IN WHITE AMERICA.
Collier, John, ON THE GLEAMING WAY.
Cushman, Dan, STAY AWAY, JOE.
Deloria, Vine, Jr., CUSTER DIED FOR YOUR SINS; WE TALK, YOU LISTEN.
Embree, Edwin, INDIANS OF THE AMERICAS.
Farb, Peter, MAN'S RISE TO CIVILIZATION.
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Sainte-Marie, Buffy, THE BEST OF BUFFY SAINTE-MARIE (Vanguard): "My Country 'Tis of Thy People You're Dying"; "Now That the Buffalo's Gone."
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## Part Two

### *Soul Brothers and Sisters; Afro-Americans*

We have seen how most Indians wanted to be left alone to live according to their own life style, to preserve their cultural heritage intact. The Native Americans have preferred to remain apart ever since conquest and have avoided the contamination--unless forced upon them--that intimacy with white values wreaks on their culture. Their glory lies in the past; their hopes for the future involve, for the most part, quite different goals from those of their white neighbors. Among the Indian goals, cultural pluralism ranks high.

Afro-Americans, on the other hand, have adopted many of the goals of the white man and have been demanding their fair share of the future of the country that they were forced to work so hard to help create. They have adopted the material goals of the predominating culture: the prestige of big new cars, spacious new houses, stylish clothes, beauty queens--the status symbols of success that they claim white people have long been dangling like a carrot in front of their less fortunate neighbors. This choice of goals evolved quite naturally: every attempt was made to eradicate African culture and language vestiges, so slaves filled the vacuum with the culture of those closest around them, even though it was that of their oppressors.

Only recently has there been a movement toward appreciation of the African heritage and indigenous culture; this is exemplified in the "black is beautiful" motif. Most Afro-Americans want first of all to gain a dignified place in the environment, America, in which they find themselves, while at the same time regaining the separate cultural identity of Africa.

The plight of Black Americans is one that has probably been brought to your attention most often and in more detail than that of any other group we shall study. Hence, a brief review of the salient features of their condition should be enough to refresh your memory.

Africans, as no other immigrant group, were brought to America for the express purpose of doing slave labor. (Attempts were made by early white settlers to make slaves of some Indians, but because of the Indians' intimate knowledge of the forest and surrounding terrain, it was too easy for them to slip away and vanish.) In order to assure a continued cheap labor force, plantation owners took elaborate precautions to prevent assimilation or nationalist identity among their slaves. After the long, arduous Middle Passage across the Atlantic, which killed off all weak persons and many strong ones, tribes and families were systematically separated in America. This separation process, which was repeated each time a family unit was formed among the slaves, helped to keep them powerless. An elaborate philosophical-religious system, predicated on the inferiority of the Negro, was established by whites to justify practices such as the denial of education. Even so, there were organized slave uprisings, such as the one chronicled by Arna Bontemps in the novel BLACK THUNDER, about Gabriel Prosser, and William Styron's much-applauded but also much-denigrated (by Blacks) THE CONFESSIONS OF NAT TURNER.

After the Civil War, the less overt but not less effective means of suppression like Jim Crow laws, union boycotts, denial of legislative and civil rights, all combined to keep the Negro "in his place."[1]

Not until the 1960's did the tide start to turn for Blacks, who make up approximately eleven per cent of America's population. In 1954 the Supreme Court had outlawed school segregation, but many school districts were fiercely and successfully resisting that decision. Finally, civil-rights workers--mostly young people--brought public attention to the cause and won by blood, sweat, and lives the civil-rights legislation of the 60's: the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968.

What has happened since then? Civil-rights issues today are more complex than they were a decade ago. Rising expectations have made Blacks more aware of discrimination than ever before, and their subsequent demands have raised the consciousness of most of the rest of America to a level previously unknown. But there are complications. It is relatively easy to determine whether a bigoted registrar is denying a Black person his constitutional right to vote. It is much more difficult to ascertain and prove that a Black is being denied a job or a promotion because of bias or because of an aptitude test that was loaded against him.

From 1960 to 1970, there have been advances in practically every area for Afro-Americans, but these have been accompanied at every step by disappointments. For instance, public accommodations were desegregated for the most part, but this gain has limited meaning for hundreds of thousands of Blacks whose incomes do not permit them widespread use of restaurants, theaters, and other places of entertainment. The same is true of gains in desegregation of housing: most Blacks simply cannot afford to live in suburban white neighborhoods.

There was a pronounced upgrading in the kinds of jobs filled by Blacks during the 1960's. However, the unemployment rate in the nonwhite category was still nearly double that of whites in 1970.

Despite advances, Negroes remain behind whites in most social and economic categories. And, in some respects, Negroes fell even further behind by failing to keep pace with progress made by whites. For instance, the median family income rose for nonwhites from $3,233 in 1960 to $6,516 in 1970; however, the nonwhite income is still only 64% of that of whites, and in terms of the dollar gap, there was a widening during the decade.

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[1] For a good brief history of Afro-Americans as told through actual documents, I recommend the following paperback: Thomas R. Frazier, AFRO-AMERICAN HISTORY: PRIMARY SOURCES (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1970).

Negro attendance at college has risen rapidly. As recently as 1965, only ten per cent of all college-age Negroes were enrolled. In 1970, this figure rose to sixteen per cent. But this still fell short of the proportion of college-age white youth on campus, which remained at about twenty-seven per cent throughout the five-year period.[2]

Thus we see that while undeniable gains were made in almost every area, today Black Americans still are a long way from realizing equality.

The 1972 controversy over school bussing illustrates that many basic issues are far from being resolved.

When a decision of an all-white jury declared all policemen innocent of wrongdoing in the 1970 Jackson, Mississippi, killings, militant Blacks were confirmed in their basic distrust of the system of justice in this country, as they were in the late 'sixties and early 'seventies when the Black Panther leaders were virtually eliminated nationwide through imprisonment and killing.

One major difference, especially for our purposes, between the study of Afro-Americans and of other minorities is the sizable body of good Black literature; in modern times no other minority group has written so much so well. The poet, the preacher, and the singer have always provided inspiration and hope for Black people; often these functions were combined in one person, and the resultant writings have enriched our American heritage.

Let us review briefly the history of Afro-American literature before we examine a few of its specific examples.

The earliest recorded Black poetess was Phyllis Wheatley (ca. 1753-1784), a private slave who eventually was manumitted (given her freedom); she wrote mainly heroic couplets in the style of Alexander Pope.

There is a body of literature called slave narratives, accounts of a particular slave's experiences, many of them discovered only recently. The most famous writer of these was Frederick Douglass, who is remembered for being a leader among his people. These slave narratives, written by those individuals who gleaned a minimal education from their white masters, give a historical perspective quite unlike the popularized myth of a happy, carefree, satisfied-to-be-subservient group of people.

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[2] "Negroes' Economic Gains in 10 Years," U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT, 23 August 1971, pp. 30, 31.

The next important figure on the literary scene, and even more so on the political and economic scene, is W.E.B. DuBois. He wrote five novels and many protest poems but is especially remembered for his monumental criticism entitled THE SOULS OF BLACK FOLK; in this, he was one of the first to incorporate the Negro spiritual as a literary form. His Niagara Movement and the N.A.A.C.P., which he founded, advocated a certain militancy and, as such, often were in direct opposition to the accomodationist philosophy of Booker T. Washington and his followers.

About this time a group of writers calling themselves The Talented Tenth began to emerge as a literary reaction to post-Reconstruction repression. These educated elite of Black society wrote mostly in imitation of white writing. The Talented Tenth disdained the use of folklore and the development of an indigenous literature, which certainly would not have been published by the white-controlled press. Critics acclaim James Weldon Johnson as the best artist among these writers; incidentally, he also was an exception in that he often dared to include folk material in his work. Other prominent writers of this time included Paul Laurence Dunbar and Charles W. Chesnutt.

From the time of the Twenties until the Depression of the Thirties, a popular phenomenon known as the Harlem Renaissance was occurring, reflecting the theatricality of the Jazz Age, the urban immigration movement (Harlem's population had doubled from 1900 to 1920), the rise of a Black intelligentsia, and the romantic inclinations of society at large. During this time political barriers were being attacked by Marcus Garvey and his nationalist followers. Literary artists were developing an indigenous literature to be proud of. Writers such as Alain Locke, Jean Toomer, Rudolph Fisher, Countee Cullen, Claude McKay, and Arna Bontemps were not only experimenting but perfecting their own techniques as they became reputable artists. The giant among this group was Langston Hughes, whose diverse literary talents brought him success in almost every genre. He became popular for his TALES OF SIMPLE, episodic poems that won the heart of white as well as Black America.

This seedbed of good writers could be expected to spawn great writers--and it did. The earliest of the outstanding modern Afro-American writers was Richard Wright. Wright came to literary maturity during the Depression, a time of unrest and of searching for the causes of society's failure. Marxist ideology offered convincing answers and hope for a better future, and Wright, for a time, subscribed to it. It was during Communist writers' workshops that the idea for Bigger Thomas evolved. Bigger, the hero of Wright's fiery bestseller, NATIVE SON, was unlike most heroes heretofore. He was a murderer, a rapist, a betrayer of trusts, at times ruthless toward his victims. And yet, the reader has compassion for Bigger because he is portrayed as a victim himself, the helpless victim of the society that shaped him. Such a view was startling, but soon the book became a classic as an insight into the frustrated Bigger Thomases of the world. Wright, by the way, later rejected Communism, but not before he had influenced younger writers, among them Ralph Ellison, whose INVISIBLE MAN we shall study in detail. If not before, certainly after Richard Wright, it was safe to say that Afro-American literature had "arrived," that it could be judged on its own literary merits and not just as ethnic culture.

Many good writers have emerged from the Black community since then. Melvin B. Tolson, Owen Dodson, Margaret Walker, and Gwendolyn Brooks are prominent poets. Lorraine Hansberry is remembered for RAISIN IN THE SUN and other plays. James Baldwin became a master of the novel and essay; we shall study a novel of his later.

One of the most promising current writers is LeRoi Jones, although some find him too controversial for their tastes. In one innovative novel, THE SYSTEM OF DANTE'S HELL, he recreates Dante's INFERNO in Negro slums; this is a lyrical, fragmentary, compelling piece of writing. His plays, such as DUTCHMAN, THE SLAVE, and THE TOILET, have won him renown as an angry young Black writer. His BLUES PEOPLE has become a standard musical history of the blues. Many of Jones's poems, including PREFACE TO A TWENTY VOLUME SUICIDE NOTE, are avidly read by his followers. Lately he has suspended writing and taken up politics under a Muslim name.

Supporting Jones--at least on the poetic scene--are other good writers: Lerone Bennett, June Jordan, Nikki Giovanni, Sonia Sanchez, and others. Ed Bullens writes plays about the Black experience. And on the political scene we have an abundance of authors--Malcolm X, Eldridge Cleaver, Bobby Seale, George Jackson, and others--writing protests ranging in intensity from quiet anger to exploding rage.

Thus we have seen the emergence of a strong nationalistic strain. We have also seen the evolution of Afro-American writing from the simple narrative of slaves to the sophisticated and innovative works of artists. We have seen works intrinsically interesting from a particular historical perspective but embryonic in literary value. They come from a unique Black perspective, and by adding that perspective to the mainstream of American literature, they enrich our heritage immensely. But we have also seen the development of full-fledged works of art, which, while still retaining a Black outlook, have, in addition, universal appeal. Some of these works will probably take their places among the best of world literature.

## *Assignment IV

## INVISIBLE MAN

Reading Assignment: Ralph Ellison, INVISIBLE MAN.

Ralph Ellison's INVISIBLE MAN may be viewed as an odyssey, a trip through life in a vain search for identity, just as Ulysses made his famous voyage many years ago in the original ODYSSEY. Ellison's hero--unnamed, as was Ulysses (Noman) throughout much of the ODYSSEY, to add to his sense of anonymity and universality--explores almost every avenue of experience available to him to try to find individual worth in the face of growing isolation. Each avenue is a dead end; at the end of each experience there is only a loss of innocence. Finally, at the end of his wanderings, he realizes that almost everyone, everywhere, views him as being invisible, a nonperson. He decides that he will search within himself now, in his underground hideout which he has illuminated by thousands of lights to improve his visibility. Soon he will surface, he says, but first he must search more within himself for his identity, his humanity.

Some might argue that this theme, and especially the episodes that support it, have become dated, but it is still valid as an insight into the frustrations and problems of cultural identity not only of many Afro-Americans but also of people of all races. Ellison himself says:

> Our Negro situation is changing rapidly but so much which we've gleaned through the harsh discipline of Negro American life is simply too precious to be lost. I speak of the faith, the patience, the humor, the sense of timing, rugged sense of life and the manner of expressing it which all go to define the American Negro.[1]

Born in Oklahoma City in 1914, Ralph Ellison enjoyed a childhood of many varied experiences with both whites and Blacks, and thus escaped much of the early bitterness common to his contemporaries. He has this to say about his friend Hulie:

> . . . Knowing this white boy was a very meaningful experience. It had little to do with the race question as such, but with our mutual

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[1] Richard G. Stern, "An Interview with Ralph Ellison," in BLACK VOICES: AN ANTHOLOGY OF AFRO-AMERICAN LITERATURE, ed. Abraham Chapman (New York: New American Library, 1968), p. 658.

> loneliness (I had no other playmates in that community) and a great curiosity about the growing science of radio. . . . Knowing him led me to expect much more of myself and of the world.[2]

Music was to play an important part in his life: in his growing years, Kansas City jazz and blues attained refinement in his hometown of Oklahoma City, and jazz figures became heroes to him and his friends. He became a jazz trumpeter himself. Moreover, Ralph was given training in the more socially acceptable classical music so that he could make comparisons and perceive relationships. At Tuskegee Institute he majored in music from 1933 to 1936. This intimate acquaintance with music was to have much influence on his writing.

The entire book INVISIBLE MAN is arranged as a piece of blues might be. There is one theme with many variations. As each variation progresses, intrinsically interesting as it may be, we hear echoing and reechoing in new contexts the haunting melody of the theme. Ellison speaks of the blues as serving a ritual function, as giving order to chaos; and certainly the telling of this story gives order, arrangement, harmony to its episodes. He has also said:

> The blues is an impulse to keep the painful details and episodes of a brutal experience alive in one's aching consciousness, to finger its jagged grain, and to transcend it, not by the consolation of philosophy but by squeezing from it a near-tragic, near-comic lyricism. As a form, the blues is an autobiographical chronicle of personal catastrophe.[3]

Ellison left Tuskegee to study sculpture in New York, but Richard Wright convinced him to try his hand at writing instead. As editor of a journal, Wright encouraged the young Ellison to submit reviews and then stories, and together they talked of themes. Ellison read NATIVE SON chapter by chapter as Wright wrote it, but thought the hero, Bigger Thomas, was too simplistic a character.

Here are some comments Ellison has made about his own writing which you might find helpful to apply to INVISIBLE MAN:

> I learned very early that in the realm of the imagination all people and their ambitions and interests could meet.[4]

> I have no desire to write propaganda. Instead I felt it important to explore the full range of American Negro humanity and to affirm those qualities which are of value beyond any question of segregation, economics or previous condition of servitude.[5]

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[2] Stern, p. 646.

[3] Edward Margolies, NATIVE SONS (New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1968), p. 132.

[4] Stern, p. 652.

[5] Stern, p. 655.

> I think that the mixture of the marvelous and the terrible is a basic condition of human life and that the persistence of human ideals represents the marvelous pulling itself up out of the chaos of the universe.[6]
>
> . . . I believe in diversity, and I think that the real death of the United States will come when everyone is just alike.
>
> As for my writer's necessity of cashing in on the pain undergone by my people (and remember I write of the humor as well), writing is my way of confronting, often for the hundredth time, that same pain and that same pleasure. It is my way of seeing that it be not in vain.[7]

INVISIBLE MAN was seven years in the writing. It won the National Book Award for Fiction in 1952; in 1965 a BOOK WEEK poll of 200 critics, authors, and editors judged it to be "the most distinguished single work" published in the last twenty years. Since then, there have been essays and a few short stories, interviews and lectures, but not the second Ellison novel that everyone has been anticipating.

INVISIBLE MAN begins as a trusting, naive high school student is about to give a valedictory speech at a smoker for prominent white citizens in the deep South. This trust was a part of Ellison's own earlier life, as we see from his comment:

> And for me none of this [material world available to white people] was hopelessly beyond the reach of my Negro world, really; because if you worked and you fought for your rights, and so on, you could finally achieve it. This involved our American Negro faith in education, of course, and the idea of self-cultivation--although I couldn't have put it that way back during the days when the idea first seized me.[8]

This trust gradually dissolves into cynicism as the hero in INVISIBLE MAN finds himself betrayed successively by white liberals, Black accomodationists, white scientists, Black nationalists, Communists, spiritualists, and practitioners of almost every other ideology wooing the modern Black man.

Ellison has worked his way through three different literary techniques as the protagonist (main character) moves from one experience to another. He has tried to merge content with form, making the stylistic progression fit the shifting states of mind produced in the hero. The three styles used are these:

1. Naturalism: applies the principles of scientific determinism to fiction. The fundamental view of man that the naturalist takes is of an

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[6] Stern, p. 658.

[7] Stern, p. 659.

[8] Stern, pp. 647-648.

animal in the natural world, responding to environmental forces and internal stresses and drives, over none of which he has either control or full knowledge. The author selects not the commonplace but the representative and so arranges the materials that the structure of the novel reveals the pattern of ideas that forms the author's view of the nature of experience. (Thrall, Hibbard, p. 301)

2. Expressionism: uses objects in art not as representations but as transmitters of the impressions and moods of a character or of the author or artist. Involved are the distortion of the objects of the outer world and the violent dislocation of time sequence and spatial logic in an effort to show accurately but not representationally the world as it appears to a troubled mind. (Thrall, Hibbard, p. 106)

3. Surrealism: emphasizes the expression of the imagination as realized in dreams and presented without conscious control. (Thrall, Hibbard, p. 476)

The symbols Ellison uses are original for the most part and usually do not intrude conspicuously on the narrative or appear artificial.

Each adventure possesses its own intrinsic interest, yet one can see echoes of earlier episodes in each; for example, the fight in the boiler room is reminiscent of the fight at the smoker because both involve Blacks fighting Blacks while both sides are being used by whites. The same motifs keep recurring. (A motif is a simple element that serves as a basis for expanded narrative, a recurring melodic phrase, or a prevailing idea [Thrall, Hibbard, p. 294].) Since motifs are used in music as well as literature, we can see why Ellison would choose to use them frequently in his blues-structured novel. The content of the letter from Bledsoe is a good example of a motif: "Keep this nigger boy running." How often he is kept running throughout the novel!

This echoing and reechoing of the theme becomes a little tedious. It is stated in various ways, but always it is the same theme. We know that each episode, each attempt to find identity and visibility, will result in more frustration. Granted, this blues-pattern structure is what Ellison sought, but transferred from music to a long novel, it seems to omit something; for one thing, the element of surprise is lacking.

And the hero appears distant, passive. As with Momaday's Abel, it is difficult to develop empathy for someone we don't know better. However purposefully Ellison may have structured the novel this way, however this distance emphasizes the lack of identity, somehow we wish it were otherwise.

Most critics agree that this novel is very nearly great, but that it does not quite succeed. Perhaps Ellison's second novel will be free of these flaws.

Writing Assignment:

Answer eight of the following fifteen questions. Most of the topics will require shorter answers than in the preceding assignments.

1. At what point in the narrative do the transitions in the literary techniques occur (naturalism, expressionism, surrealism)? Do these changes seem to fit intrinsically into the narrative; that is, as the hero changes, does the change in technique express his feelings better than the previous style? Which technique do you think is most effective and why? (Remember to use specific episodes to support your position.)

2. Explain the playing of Louis Armstrong's "What Did I Do to Be so Black and Blue?" as a motif.

3. The hero's dying grandfather lets him in on a secret. Try to fit the grandfather's words into the pattern of the rest of the book. Are they echoed later? Does the hero's evolving philosophy differ from the grandfather's? If so, how?

4. What symbolism is intended by the use of the electrified rug and the mad scramble for coins? Is this symbolism echoed later, and if so, in what scenes?

5. What is the meaning of the incident between Norton and Trueblood? Why might Norton get vicarious satisfaction from Trueblood's tale? Why is Trueblood a threat to Norton's paternalism?

6. Frequently Ellison includes scenes of chaos. List all such scenes and decide whether they make a pattern. What do each of the scenes have in common? How do they differ?

7. Explain the incident of the blind minister at the college. What dimension does this episode add to the novel? Are there any echoes of this scene, and if so, what are they?

8. What is the allegory in the protagonist's job of mixing paint? Is this allegory too obvious for your taste?

9. Explain the boiler-room incident in terms of its symbolism. What is the significance of Lucius Brockaway and the hero's being at the center of all the machines, underneath the building?

10. What is the significance of the prefrontal lobotomy in terms of personal identity? What evidence is there that the operation was not completely successful?

11. Ras (race) is somewhat reminiscent of Marcus Garvey. Look up Garvey and note the similarities. Why does the protagonist reject him?

12. In what ways does the Brotherhood exploit the hero?

13. Why does Tod Clifton finally sell dancing-Sambo dolls? What do they symbolize? Comment on the manner of Tod's death and its meaning to our protagonist.

14. What were the various roles of Rinehart? The hero can slip from one role to another, even though these roles differ drastically. What do these changes of role show?

15. What mementos has the briefcase contained? What is the significance of each of the items?

## ASSIGNMENT V

## GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

Reading Assignment: James Baldwin, GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN.

Second only perhaps to the blues, the cultural institution that Southern Negroes transplanted most successfully to Northern soil was their church. Like the blues, the church fulfilled important functions, especially for those newly emigrating. Not only did it serve the spiritual needs of the community, but it came to function as a kind of community newspaper linking the migrants to their Southern past, making a bit more bearable the abrupt transition between rural and urban life and the constantly shifting, incomprehensible complexities of the Negroes' "place." The church also gave them a socially acceptable outlet for their rage, terror, and frustrations--in its thinly veiled apocalyptic warnings, its evangelical fervor, and its promises of a better life to come. In addition, it functioned as a political force, drawing together persons of diverse Southern origins and directing them toward common goals. (Witness the impact of the late Adam Clayton Powell.) And the church partially fulfilled their psychic needs: by identifying themselves with a strong and wrathful Old Testament God, boys could assume the masculinity they often missed in their family and social lives. (There is a disproportionately high number of lower-class Negro families without fathers; in addition, the emasculating effects of white society's debasing Negro men as "boys" and denying them meaningful work has caused a serious problem of masculine identity for many Negro boys.)

As Ralph Ellison writes within a framework of the blues, James Baldwin transposes his characters' dilemmas into theological terms: sin, guilt, atonement, damnation, salvation, etc. The most clear-cut example of this transposition is in Baldwin's first novel, GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN. But before we begin our study of this novel, let us take a look at Baldwin's life to examine the forces that shaped his character.

James Baldwin was born in New York City on August 2, 1924. He was the first of nine children and grew up in Harlem where his stepfather was an evangelical minister. This stepfather--stern, distant, and authoritarian--insisted that his children devote as much spare time as they could to learning his views of Christian teachings. The piety and puritanical rigor that permeated the household wrought its effect on Baldwin, for at the age of fourteen, he became a Young Minister. While attending DeWitt Clinton High School in New York, Baldwin's ardor for Christianity began to cool as he became occupied with literature, but his writing career has been shaped by the rhetoric of evangelism and by his childhood understanding of the nature of the Christian experience.

For six years after his graduation from high school in 1942, he worked in a variety of jobs. At age 24 he left for Europe and lived there almost ten years. (The attitudes of the expatriate are also evident in his writings.) During his years abroad, he wrote GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN, NOTES OF A NATIVE SON, and GIOVANNI'S ROOM (1953, '55, and '56, respectively).

Since returning to New York, where he now lives, his publications and awards have been numerous. Some of the major publications are NOBODY KNOWS MY NAME (essays, 1961), ANOTHER COUNTRY (novel, 1962), THE FIRE NEXT TIME (essays, 1963), BLUES FOR MISTER CHARLIE (drama, 1964), GOING TO MEET THE MAN (short-story collection, 1965), and THE AMEN CORNER (drama, 1968). In addition, he is a frequent contributor of interviews, short stories, and articles to magazines and other periodicals. His prolific body of excellent writing has won him many honors and established him as one of the foremost writers in America today.

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN is ostensibly the story of fourteen-year-old John Grimes's religious conversion, perhaps as Baldwin remembers his own experience. But more than that it is the story of John's father, Gabriel, and the hold he has on the lives of the people closest to him. Baldwin attempts to weave together the lives and psychology of all the characters--Florence, Elizabeth, John, and Gabriel--but also to relate these lives to the Southern Negro experience and the shocks of urban slum living. The church softens the impact and makes their lives bearable, but it does not remove the dangerous trials all must face.

In contrast to Ellison and Momaday, Baldwin does a masterful job of characterization; he succeeds in making not one but at least four or five characters become painfully alive to us. In terms of technical skill and mastery of the elements of narrative style, Baldwin surpasses any writer we have studied thus far.

The first part of this three-part novel introduces us to the futility and the frustration that permeate the lives of these Harlem dwellers. John, his mother, and his Aunt Florence alternately hate, fear, and distrust Gabriel, a stern, self-righteous man who does not conceal his animosity toward John. This deacon of the church, in spite of the narrowness of his life and his complete lack of charity, maintains the authoritarian pose of righteous head of his family. John, on the other hand, is shown to be a sensitive, intelligent adolescent suffering from a sense of sin and yearning to break from the ghetto into the exotic white world beyond.

"The Prayers of the Saints" examines in more depth the background for the miserable lives of Florence, Gabriel, and Elizabeth, and through them, the life of John. Each prays, and allows his mind to wander over the past while doing so. We see that the prayers are all these poor saints have at the present; their prayers have helped them to objectify their miseries and so to survive.

Part Three, "The Threshing Floor," picks up the threads of John's story once more. During a service at the family church, John experiences a lengthy Pentecostal-type conversion. Everyone is proud and happy that he joins the saints, especially the seventeen-year-old Young Minister Elisha whom John so much admired. Everyone except, of course, Gabriel, who cannot stand to see John, rather than his own blood son, Roy, join the elect. But for what he senses is only one suspended moment in time, John is beyond his stepfather's hatred; his fear and guilt and desire and despair and hatred have all been converted into a meaningful delirium as he lies thrashing about the floor; he has come through the darkness into light.

By means of the walk home from the service, Baldwin returns his characters --and the reader--to harsh realities. Florence and Gabriel are "at it again," and John, although still savoring the glow of his glory, is fearful of Gabriel and the future. Baldwin seems to be saying that, however effective as a palliative for the moment, religion is by no means all that is needed to ease the lives of these overburdened saints.

Writing Assignment: Answer six of the following ten questions.

1. Baldwin effectively uses the scene of John's cleaning the apartment (pp. 24-25) to illustrate a point. What is the point? What does this show about the lives of the occupants? What other scenes and images does Baldwin create to achieve the same effect elsewhere in the novel?

2. When Roy is slashed with the knife, what do we learn about Gabriel? About John? About Roy? About Florence? About Elizabeth? (Notice how concisely and masterfully the characters of each of these people and their relationships to each other are elucidated for us.)

3. Discuss Elisha and John. What does John especially admire in Elisha? What roles does Elisha fulfill for John?

4. Gabriel and Florence are continually at odds. Indeed, now that Florence is alone, she seems almost to live solely to torment Gabriel. Who is stronger, Gabriel or Florence? Why does she feel responsible for the marriage of Elizabeth and Gabriel? What does the letter have to do with her strength? Why doesn't she use it, as she threatens she will?

5. In what ways is Florence's treatment of her husband analogous to her mother's relationship to Gabriel? What does this tell us about Florence? Does this make her a woman doomed to misery?

6. In what ways are Deborah and Elizabeth alike? Consider their religious fervor, their "shame," their humane qualities, their submissiveness. Why were they attracted to Gabriel, and he to them? (Think especially in terms of expiation of guilt.) In what ways are they different?

7. Discuss Gabriel. What qualities, if any, does he have that ameliorate his harshness? Do you think he is sincere--for the moment, at least--when he makes promises like, "I'll love your son, your little boy . . . just like he was my own." (p. 163)? Or is there more truth in what Florence says, "You ain't changed neither. You still promising the Lord you going to do better--and you think whatever you done already, whatever you doing right at that minute, don't count. . . ." (p. 186)? Discuss the fact that he always claims to be the deliverer, the righteous one, in his relations with the other people of the story. Does he really believe in his own righteousness? If not, why does he continually assume this pose?

8. The description of John's conversion is compelling and powerfully written. What are some of the methods Baldwin uses to make it so?

9. What is there about John's experience that is universal; that is, which frustrations, etc. might be suffered by any adolescent? Which of his feelings are those of a Black; that is, which arise from experiences that only Negroes are likely to encounter?

10. What hope do you see for these people? Will their lives be different now? Have they gained self-knowledge? Have they grown, matured? Do you think John will break out of the ghetto and its patterns of frustration and humiliation, as he wishes?

## Assignment VI

## I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS

Reading Assignment: Maya Angelou, I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS.

This autobiography is one of the most heart-warming, one of the most poignant books we shall study. I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS is packed with more warmth, humor, and love than most books you will read. Growing up Black in the deep South was filled with painful as well as happy experiences (although, as one reviewer points out, Maya never suffered the pain of real poverty, as so many of her contemporaries did). As readers we laugh and cry over these experiences as Maya Angelou gently leads us through them, one by one.

The predominating motif is set with the very first pain-filled words:

> "What you looking at me for?
> I didn't come to stay."

And stay she didn't--at least not many years in each place. Stamps, Arkansas, came closest to being home, and parts of this book are almost a eulogy to the Black townspeople, and the store, and Uncle Willie, and especially Momma--all of whom constituted Maya's childhood environment. St. Louis, on the other hand, held agonizing memories. Because she had no help in understanding the traumatic experiences of rape and her predator's death, these memories were intensified as she blamed herself and turned inward. With her trip to California and life with Daddy Johnson, and later Mother Dear and Daddy Clidell, the pace of her life quickened, and she found herself in a great variety of new situations. Only Bailey, her brother, remained with her, the sole constant factor of her life.

Each chapter relates one incident, chronologically arranged, after which Maya usually draws some philosophical conclusions, often in the form of an aphorism. (An aphorism is a concise statement of a principle or precept given in pointed words [Thrall, Hibbard, p. 29].) Some of the more impressive ones follow:

> The tragedy of lameness seems so unfair to children that they are embarrassed in its presence. And they, most recently off nature's mold, sense that they have only narrowly missed being another of her mistakes. (p. 8)

> The saying that people who have nothing to do become busybodies is not the only truth. Excitement is a drug, and people whose lives are filled with violence are always wondering where the next "fix" is coming from. (p. 69)

> A stranger to the music could not have made a distinction between the songs sung a few minutes before and those being danced to in the gay house by the railroad tracks. All asked the same questions. How long, oh God? How long? (p. 111)

A few incidents--such as the tent revival meeting and Bailey's leaving home--seem to be written less well than others, but most of them are vividly portrayed.

Many of Angelou's metaphors are delightful. (A metaphor is an implied analogy that imaginatively identifies one object with another and ascribes to the first one or more of the qualities of the second or invests the first with emotional or imaginative qualities associated with the second [Thrall, Hibbard, p. 281].) This one gives you a good example of her skill:

> The sounds of tag beat through the trees while the top branches waved in contrapuntal rhythms. (p. 115)

Here is another gem:

> And the catheads [biscuits] had sat down on themselves with the conclusiveness of a fat woman sitting in an easy chair. (p. 31)

Some episodes are hilarious. Maya's ability to laugh at herself, and to make the reader laugh at the whole scene, is redeeming. Undoubtedly one of the funniest episodes is the "I say, Preach It" scene.

You probably are curious about what happened to Maya after the events of this book. On page 247 of your book are listed several of her accomplishments. During the 1950's, she was a well-known singer and dancer of calypso on the nightclub circuit; she also composed several hit songs. Active in movies, the recording industry, civil-rights causes, she has traveled around the world. A book of her poems has been published. She wrote this autobiography in London, a city she said was "ideally inhospitable." Now she makes her home in New York City, where she is active in the Harlem Writers' Guild in her spare time and travels as guest lecturer. She does not comment on her two unsuccessful marriages. Currently she is at work on a book of fiction and on a movie of this autobiography; she has been hired as Hollywood's first Black-woman movie director to write the script and music as well as to direct the forthcoming "Caged Bird."

Writing Assignment:

In well-developed essays answer five of the following nine questions. Remember to support each answer with specific incidents.

1. How would you summarize the development of Maya's attitude toward whites? What descriptive label would you apply to her final position about race (for example, militant, moderate, accomodationist, etc.)? How do some of the incidents change her attitude?

2. Delineate in detail the role that Bailey played in Maya's life.

3. Why, in spite of the segregation, was Stamps a more secure place for Maya to be than St. Louis or California? In your answer concentrate, not on the people involved, but on the racial climate of these places.

4. Write a character sketch of Maya's grandmother, Annie Henderson. Which traits that Momma tried to instill remained most indelibly imprinted on Maya?

5. Write a character sketch of either Daddy Johnson or Mother Dear. What seemed to be their guiding philosophies? Since their lifestyles were quite different from that of Momma, we might expect Maya to make judgments about them; does she? What aspects of their legacies to her does she seem to retain?

6. Comment on this quotation in relation to its context:

> If we were a people much given to revealing secrets, we might raise monuments and sacrifice to the memories of our poets, but slavery cured us of that weakness. It may be enough, however, to have it said that we survive in exact relationship to the dedication of our poets (include preachers, musicians and blues singers). (p. 156)

7. What special lessons did Maya learn from her experience in the junkyard? What is ironical about the situation?

8. Comment on this quotation:

> The needs of a society determine its ethics, and in the Black American ghettos the hero is that man who is offered only the crumbs from his country's table but by ingenuity and courage is able to take for himself a Lucullan feast. Hence the janitor who lives in one room but sports a robin's-egg-blue Cadillac is not laughed at but admired, and the domestic who buys forty-dollar shoes is not criticized but is appreciated. We know that they have put to use their full mental and physical powers. Each single gain feeds into the gains of the body collective. (p. 190)

Does this statement offend your middle-class morality, or do you see in it elemental justice? Do you agree with the first premise of the quotation?

9. Relate several incidents you thought were humorous. Which of them was funniest to you? Try to analyze what there was in the telling as well as in the situation itself that made each seem so funny.

## Assignment VII

## MANCHILD IN THE PROMISED LAND

Reading Assignment: Claude Brown, MANCHILD IN THE PROMISED LAND.

MANCHILD IN THE PROMISED LAND makes a good companion piece to I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS. MANCHILD concerns the growing up of a Black boy, and CAGED BIRD the youth of a Black girl. MANCHILD takes place in urban Harlem in the 1950's; at about the same time Stamps, Arkansas, is the rural setting for much of Angelou's autobiography. One book tells of the particular problems of the North, the other of the deep South. One protagonist's earliest experiences are with crime, the other's with religion. Both works are autobiographies and are told with the immediacy of individuals who have participated fully in the described culture, not with the detachment of an observer. Both authors present their stories, situations, and characters with good humor and with a candid unfolding of the action--without judgment, preaching, or proposals for improvement.

One reviewer has said:

> Brown has nothing to say that has not already been said better by James Baldwin and John Killens; indeed, it has been put more accurately and succinctly by Dr. Kenneth Clark's teams of sociologists in their statistical tables.[1]

It is true that from a literary point of view, Brown cannot be compared with Baldwin. But from a sociological point of view, I'm sure you'd much rather read Brown's MANCHILD than Clark's statistical tables. MANCHILD is not great literature, but it is life. One of the reasons for reading is to experience vicariously what you do not have the opportunity to experience firsthand. And MANCHILD is like a personally guided tour of the childhood in Harlem that most of us will never encounter. This book has maintained a tremendous popularity among Blacks as well as whites.

One word of caution: if strong, abusive language offends you, you'd better pass this book by. This is written in the language of the street, with four-letter words intact. If you do choose to read MANCHILD, be prepared to stumble briefly over the slang, some of which has local or dated meanings; with perseverance, however, you will be able to figure out most of the meanings from the context, and the reading will go faster as you move more deeply into the book.

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[1] Warren Miller, "One Score in Harlem," SATURDAY REVIEW, 28 August 1965, p. 49.

Claude Brown's story is a most unusual one. At the age of five, we meet him on the street pursuing a life of petty crime: he is to become a violent hoodlum, a thief, a bully, a hustler. He is to spend his youth in and out of children's centers, reform school, and jails (where he always finds his fraternity of friends waiting for him). We watch with terror as his friends take the paths of drug addiction, junking, pimping, whoring, killing. With a mixture of brutality and devotion Claude's parents, themselves unable to comprehend the life around them, try to raise their children. Yet out of all this, Claude (Sonny) emerges phoenix-like, to make up his lost education and become a lawyer.

How did this transformation come about? What magic worked on him that failed with so many of his friends? Certainly his story defies all commonly held tenets about early education. And Claude does not himself answer this question fully. He merely alludes to the people, primarily at Wiltwyck, who developed his interest in reading books, studying music, and finally in going back to school. But what he read, how he overcame the monumental hurdles of making up so much lost time, is not told. Perhaps Brown wanted to keep these things to himself.

Rather, his is the story of his childhood and youth, of what it is like on the streets of Harlem and in the various detention centers. His is a vivid description of survival in a place where mere survival is a notable achievement.

Writing Assignment: Answer four of the following eight questions.

1. Compare the various institutions mentioned, especially in terms of their rehabilitation programs as seen through Sonny's eyes. Can you draw some conclusions about the effectiveness of the various kinds of programs? How much of this effectiveness do you think is due to Sonny's being more receptive at certain times than at others, and how much is inherent in the programs themselves?

2. Which people of the establishment did he respect the most? Were there any traits these people had in common?

3. Within the context of their own world, Sonny and his friends acted logically, honorably, morally. Do you agree with this statement? Support your answer.

4. Discuss Sonny's attitude toward the various girls and women he encounters in the book. Can you make some generalizations about his attitude toward women?

5. Which of Sonny's friends did you like best? Why? Which one did you most admire? Why? Whose life did you find the most tragic? Why?

6. Offer some possible explanations why Pimp turned out to be a failure, in Sonny's eyes. Why could Sonny not save him?

7. Discuss Sonny's father and his relationship with Sonny. Why was the father so brutal at times?

8. Comment on Brown's style of writing. Did you find the reading difficult? How would you characterize the style (as lyrical, realistic, etc.)? If you have read Baldwin's GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN, compare the uses of dialect in that book and in MANCHILD. Why is Baldwin easier to read?

## Suggested Supplemental Reading: Afro-Americans

Since there is such an abundance of good literature from which to choose on this topic, the following list confines itself to contemporary publications from the field of literature alone. In addition, works by any of the authors mentioned in this section of the syllabus are recommended.

### Novels:

Baldwin, James, ANOTHER COUNTRY.
Jones, LeRoi, THE SYSTEM OF DANTE'S HELL.
Wright, Richard, NATIVE SON.

### Plays:

Baldwin, James, BLUES FOR MISTER CHARLIE; THE AMEN CORNER.
Hansberry, Lorraine, RAISIN IN THE SUN.
Jones, LeRoi, DUTCHMAN.

### Autobiographies:

Malcolm X, THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MALCOLM X.
Wright, Richard, BLACK BOY.

### Anthologies:

Chapman, Abraham, ed., BLACK VOICES.
Davis, Charles T. and Daniel Walden, eds., ON BEING BLACK.
Jones, LeRoi and Larry Neal, eds., BLACK FIRE.

### Nonfiction:

Baldwin, James, NOBODY KNOWS MY NAME; THE FIRE NEXT TIME; NOTES OF A NATIVE SON.
Cleaver, Eldridge, SOUL ON ICE.
Jones, LeRoi, HOME; BLUES PEOPLE.
King, Martin Luther, Jr., WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE--CHAOS OR COMMUNITY?

### Short Stories:

Baldwin, James, GOING TO MEET THE MAN.

### Folk Tales:

Dorson, Richard M., AMERICAN NEGRO FOLKTALES.
Hughes, Langston, and Arna Bontemps, BOOK OF NEGRO FOLKLORE.

### Literary Criticism:

Bone, Robert, THE NEGRO NOVEL IN AMERICA.
Brown, Sterling A., NEGRO POETRY AND DRAMA; THE NEGRO IN AMERICAN FICTION.
Locke, Alain, THE NEW NEGRO.
Margolies, Edward, NATIVE SONS.
Turner, Darwin, BLACK AMERICAN LITERATURE: ESSAYS.

### Bibliography:

Turner, Darwin T., AFRO-AMERICAN WRITERS.

### Records: (In place of the author, listed below is the reader.)

Bond, Bryce, *GOD'S TROMBONES* BY JAMES WELDON JOHNSON.
Bontemps, Arna, ANTHOLOGY OF NEGRO POETS IN THE U.S.A.
Hughes, Langston, LANGSTON HUGHES READS AND TALKS ABOUT HIS POEMS.
King, Martin Luther, Jr., IN SEARCH OF FREEDOM.
Parks, Gordon, THE LEARNING TREE.
Stewart, Melvin, THE BEST OF *SIMPLE* BY LANGSTON HUGHES.

# Part Three

## *The Other Half: Women*

The first two sections of this course dealt with racism, certainly an ugly blot on America's consciousness. Yet Shirley Chisholm, Black Congresswoman, has said, "On several occasions I have been more discriminated against as a woman than as a Black." Statistics show that Black, Native American, Puerto Rican, and Chicano women are at the bottom of any scale, in a terrible double bind. And that women of all races and classes rank considerably lower than men by most standards of equal treatment. This brings us to a topic only recently revived in the consciousness of Americans: sexism.

Although most Americans no longer view all people in the women's movement as neurotic, bra-burning, strident-voiced man-haters, the topics of sexism and women's liberation still elicit a great deal of resistance and discomfort from many people--females as well as males--and perhaps from you. Why? The authors we will study provide some possible reasons for your discomfort. But for now, would you try to push aside your preconceived ideas and approach this problem, as you did the others, with an open mind and ready to learn?

How much do you know about the status of women today? If you are like most people, you think you know a lot; after all, either you are a woman, or "your best friend is one," to say nothing of your mother, most of your teachers --in fact, 51% of the nation's population. Let's see if you know as much as you think you do. Test your own knowledge of existing conditions by jotting down your answers to these questions:

1. The median wage for women, compared to the median wage for men doing the same work, is

    a. about the same.
    b. twenty per cent less.
    c. thirty per cent less.
    d. forty per cent less.

2. Negro men were granted the right to vote fifty years before any women were. True or false?

3. Women drivers have fewer accidents than men drivers. True or false?

4. The Supreme Court upheld a Texas law declaring that a married woman did not have the capacity to enter into a binding contract. This decision came

    a. in 1886.
    b. in 1926.
    c. in 1966.

5. A working white woman with a B.A. degree earns, on the average, less than a working Black man with an eighth-grade education. True or false?

6. Why do men so often sell women's shoes, while women sell men's underwear?

a. Women want a man's opinion when they buy shoes.
b. Women often buy the underwear for their men, and prefer to buy from a woman.
c. Selling shoes is a commission job; selling underwear is usually a low-paid salary job.

7. Women lose more days from work each year than men do. True or false?

8. A study of chemists' salaries showed that, with seniority held constant, women who held Ph.D.s earned less than men with B.A.s. True or false?

9. Why was the word "sex" added to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?

a. Legislators were concerned about discrimination against women.
b. Women's-rights pressure groups had lobbied successfully in the House of Representatives.
c. It was a joke, put in as a last-minute attempt to get the bill defeated.

10. Women are overdrawn at the bank less frequently than men. True or false?

11. Ten per cent of U.S. families have female heads. What percentage of families classified as poor have female heads?

a. twenty per cent b. forty per cent c. eighty per cent

12. "I cannot escape the notion . . . that for women the level of what is ethically normal is different from what it is in men." Who said it?

a. Immanuel Kant b. St. Augustine c. Sigmund Freud

13. In 1920 the percentage of women who received Ph.D.s in the U.S. was

a. higher than it was in 1971.
b. lower than it was in 1971.
c. about the same as it was in 1971.

14. How many hours per week does the average housewife work?

a. forty and three-tenths hours
b. sixty-six and seven-tenths hours
c. ninety-nine and six-tenths hours

15. The cotton gin was invented by

a. Eli Whitney.
b. Catharine Greene.
c. Catharine Greene and Eli Whitney.

16. In childhood, males are more likely than females to have severe psychological problems; in adulthood, the reverse is true. True or false?

17. A 1970 study at The University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas, revealed that female faculty members averaged how much less salary per year than male faculty members of comparable rank?

a. $50. b. $500. c. over $2000.

18. The relative weight of a female brain is greater than that of a male. True or false?

19. According to a recent study, most clinical psychologists regard the healthy adult as having the characteristics of

a. the healthy man.
b. the healthy woman.
c. both men and women equally.

20. In how many states are a woman's earnings under the complete control of her husband?

a. none any more b. four c. thirty-two

Now check your answers. As you do this, think about the implications of these findings:

1. d. The median wage for women is forty per cent less than that for men doing the same work.

2. True. Negro men were granted the right to vote fifty years before any women were.

3. True. Women drivers have fewer accidents than men drivers.

4. c. This decision came in 1966.

5. True. A working white woman with a B.A. degree earns, on the average, less than a working Black man with an eighth-grade education.

6. c. Selling shoes is a commission job; selling underwear is usually a low-paid salary job. (The next time you shop in a store, notice who has the best jobs.)

7. False. Men lose slightly more days from work.

8. True. A study of chemists' salaries showed that, with seniority held constant, women who held Ph.D.s earned less than men with B.A.s.

9. c. It was a joke, put in as a last-minute attempt to get the bill defeated.

10. True. Men are overdrawn at the bank more often than women.

11. b. Forty per cent of poor families have female heads.

12. c. Sigmund Freud said it. (Freud is the originator of many long-held misconceptions about women.)

13. a. The 1920 percentage of female Ph.D.s was higher than it was in 1971.

14. c. Housewives work ninety-nine and six tenths hours per week (according to a Chase Manhattan Bank survey).

15. c. The idea was Mrs. Greene's, but since women could not be inventors, Whitney built the machine for her.

16. True. In childhood, males are more likely than females to have severe psychological problems. In adulthood, the reverse is true.

17. c. Women faculty members at The University of Kansas averaged over $2000 less per year than men of equal rank (according to a survey conducted by Dean Heller's office [available upon request]).

18. True. The relative weight of a female brain is greater than that of a male (a compensating equalizer, no doubt, for the fact that the average female brain is smaller than that of a male).

19. a. According to recent tests most clinical psychologists regard the healthy man as a standard for the healthy adult. Some women psychiatrists have recently filed suit for damages done to female patients by the male-oriented professions of psychiatry and psychology.

20. b. In four states a husband has complete legal control of his wife's earnings.[1]

Are you convinced there is a problem? Has your consciousness been raised? Perhaps so, but what does this have to do with you? Most of you are not married or working yet, so how does all this apply to your lives now? Let's take a brief look at how sexism might be operating in your school by examining the two most important female youth roles, that of cheerleader and beauty queen.

What is the single most desirable goal for most high school girls? To be aware, intelligent, inquiring, knowledgeable, free, creative? Of course not.

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[1] Many of these questions and answers are taken from Carol Tavris and John B. Wexo, "Woman and Man: A Game of Confrontation," PSYCHOLOGY TODAY, July 1971, pp. 53-54, 79.

It is to be popular. Most girls emulate--more or less successfully--those they consider most popular. And who are the most popular girls?

Cheerleaders have been on the top of the popularity pyramid for a long time. Just what does a cheerleader do? She leads the spectators in *supporting* the chosen few--boys--who are performing on the football field or basketball court. When the team wins, she wins vicariously, training for her adult supportive role, when she will be expected to seek much of her own identity through the achievements of her husband and children.

What happens to female athletes, to girls who want to achieve in sports on their own?[2] Have you ever heard of male cheerleaders urging them on except perhaps in jest?

Unquestionably one of the qualifications necessary for a cheerleader is her attractiveness. Imagine selecting the football team on the basis of how handsome each boy is! This topic of physical appearance leads us to the second idol:

The beauty queen. How much adulation (and envy) is heaped on the girl who has won out over all competition to be the "reigning" beauty? Because she was beautiful and popular to begin with, she receives this honor which makes her even more popular and beautiful in the beholders' eyes. But is that really a pedestal she's on, or has she been paraded and judged like a cow at an auction, to go to the highest bidder to sell a product--whether that product be a wholesome school image, football tickets, toothpaste, clothes, or cosmetics?

How much time, money, and effort is spent by most girls on clothes, on cosmetics, on practicing smiles and other poses, all to package themselves as a desirable, passive commodity for boys. Why? A girl must be pleasing to look at, no matter what is in her "pretty little head." A girl's success is measured by whom and how often she dates; this "success" is often directly related to how she looks. Women's liberationists call these sisters, and themselves, sex objects.

What's wrong with being a sex object? This question demands a more lengthy answer than we can afford here; suffice it to say that the line between a healthy respect for sexuality and exploitation of it can be a fine one. Certainly one of the drawbacks to being a sex object is that there is little time and energy left for the rest of the spectrum of human pursuits when a girl devotes her major efforts to making herself attractive, if she worries most about how she appears to boys (as ego-booster, as sweet, demure, docile, etc.), and about what impression she gives. She is not free to develop those other aspects of herself she may want to explore.

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[2] For a discussion of the status of female athletes, see Marie Hart, "Women Sit in the Back of the Bus," PSYCHOLOGY TODAY, October 1971, pp. 64ff.

In addition, the system of competition has built-in failure--or at best, limited success--for the vast majority of girls; only a few can be cheerleaders and only one at a time, beauty queens. What does this do to the search for identity of the others? Do they have little personal worth because they've failed at what society considers most important?

Most girls deliberately waste some of their best learning years because they are afraid of being unpopular. How many of you girls play coy and dumb when boys are around? And you'd never beat a boy in any kind of contest, would you? How many of you will hand in good written assignments but rarely open your mouths in class for fear of appearing smarter than boys you're hoping will ask you for a date? And why must you wait for a boy to ask you for a date in the first place? How many of you have sniggered at a girl because she was intelligent, that is, unfeminine? Studies have shown that, by the time of high school, most American girls have acquired a "will to fail"; especially when competing with boys, most girls will do much worse than they are capable of doing. They would rather sacrifice whatever wounded pride is involved, for beating a boy means losing, by society's standards.

What is the ultimate goal of every girl? Toward what do the roles of supportive cheerleader and sex-object beauty queen lead? Toward marriage, of course. All models--books for teen-age girls, TV commercials and programs, newspaper society pages, to say nothing of most mothers and friends--all groom and push, subtly and not so subtly, toward that one panacea for all ills: marriage. From the first onset of puberty (a time of physical upheaval, when a person ought to have time to come to grips with her new self), the race is on toward marriage, and a fierce race it is, with the stakes so high.

Society seems blinded to the fact that this idol of marriage which they hold before every girl has feet of clay; one out of every four marriages ends in divorce, countless others are unhappy. Little thought is given to life after the goal has been achieved: to the nurture of human relationships basic to the core of successful marriage; to practical areas, where preparation could certainly be made (nutrition training, consumer education, sex education, child-raising help, etc.). More importantly, it does not matter that a girl may be interested in a nonstereotyped family relationship, or in an independent existence. What matters is that girls, each and every one, at whatever cost to individuals concerned, "achieve" that Wedding Day.

Even higher education is rarely undertaken by girls for reasons other than meeting and attracting a "better" husband (usually one who will earn more money). What careers are urged on bright girls? Teaching and nursing (seventy per cent of women in professional and technical occupations are nurses or teachers), the lowest-paying but "feminine," service-to-others professions. Girls who do not go on to college can look forward to jobs that men do not want (domestic work, for instance) or supportive roles (perhaps secretarial work), certainly not to lucrative managerial positions.

To be fair, we must say that some of society's strictures apply to boys as well as to girls. For example, all suffer the agonies of adolescence. All are victimized by the abuse of competition. Some sex stereotypes victimize boys even more than girls. Girls, for example, are permitted to cry, to be tender and compassionate--all of which have been found to be quite healthy outlets of emotion. Society decrees that boys, on the other hand, must be tough, must never cry, must contain their emotions, all of which leads to ulcers more often than to a healthy personality.

For the most part, however, boys of high school age are much freer to be themselves, to establish their own identities, to explore avenues of their own choosing. Boys are considered, primarily, as developing human beings. That, after all, is what high school girls, along with women of all ages, want: to be considered primarily as individual human beings.

## *Assignment VIII

## MASCULINE/FEMININE

Reading Assignment: Betty Roszak and Theodore Roszak, MASCULINE/FEMININE.
Read the selections listed below:

| | page |
|---|---|
| Forword | vii |
| Marlene Dixon, "The Rise of Women's Liberation" | 186 |
| George Bernard Shaw, "The Womanly Woman" | 53 |
| Gunnar Myrdal, "Women, Servants, Mules, and Other Property" | 68 |
| Dorothy Sayers, "The Human-Not-Quite-Human" | 116 |
| Simone de Beauvoir, "An Androgynous World" | 148 |
| Juliet Mitchell, "The Longest Revolution" | 160 |
| ______________, "The WITCH Manifesto" | 259 |
| Betty Roszak, "The Human Continuum" | 297 |
| Selected Bibliography | 307 |

MASCULINE/FEMININE is the best recent collection of essays about sexism that I have found. In this book are articles by a wide variety of writers—most of them creditable as writers as well as sociologists--on a wide variety of subjects associated with sexism. I hope that someday you will also read the other essays, those we are not going to study for this course. I have chosen the ones above because they represent a rather moderate picture of several aspects of the wide spectrum of writing about sexism and the women's movement.

You should read all the essays through quickly, in the order given here, to give yourself an overview of the articles. Then return to each one, reading carefully and answering the assignment questions. Some questions require only a one- or two-sentence answer; others require more.

Be sure to read also the introductory remarks to each essay by the editors, Betty Roszak and Theodore Roszak. In most cases, these paragraphs provide sufficient background information, and I will not add as much introductory material as I have for the other assignments.

### *Marlene Dixon, "The Rise of Women's Liberation."*

This essay is placed first for your reading because it provides a good introduction to the women's movement today; as such, it gives you an orientation to the rest of the readings.

While most of what Dixon says remains valid today, you will have to update some of her statements. For instance, the literature is now widespread; the movement has caught on at the grass-roots level, it is no longer underground. She applies the term "racism" to sex; today "sexism" would be used instead.

Writing Assignment 1:

a. What were the three social developments that gave impetus to the modern women's movement?

b. What are the three major groups comprising the movement, and what is the primary emphasis of each?

c. Why, according to Dixon, do most women feel inferior?

d. Which of her analyses of marriage and its concomitant roles for women do you find most interesting? Why?

e. Which statistic about wages that she quoted surprised you the most, and why?

### *George Bernard Shaw, "The Womanly Woman."*

Surely everyone has heard of this brilliant Irish playwright, but unless you are acquainted with his works, you probably are not aware of how far ahead of his time were his views about the status of women. If you are interested in Shaw's views on the subject, you should read MAN AND SUPERMAN and his interpolated discussion of woman as Life Force, in addition to the plays listed in your introduction.

Almost all of his plays offer the reader even more wit and perspicacity than the viewer, for the viewer misses his lively interpolations. Yet his plays are marvelous acting material as well; if you have an opportunity to see one of them performed, do so.

In "The Womanly Woman" Shaw attacks many of the issues being raised today: the need for day-care centers, society's idealization of marriage, stereotyped roles of man and woman, the domesticity of women, the need for free people. Note the beauty of the parable of the parrot. You may wish to compare this essay with a recent article entitled "The Compassion Trap,"[1] which states that living for others too often denies women the fulfillment of their own talents.

Writing Assignment 2:

Using the context of this essay as your frame of reference, comment on

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[1] Margaret Adams, "The Compassion Trap," PSYCHOLOGY TODAY, November, 1971, pp. 70ff.

Shaw's statement: "A whole basketful of ideals of the most sacred quality will be smashed by the achievement of equality for women and men."

a. List some of the "ideals" Shaw is talking about.
b. What does he mean by equality?
c. How was Marie Bashkirtseff equal?
d. Do you agree with him that good will come of this smashing?

*Gunnar Myrdal, "Women, Servants, Mules, and Other Property."*

This essay has been included to give you some historical perspective on the "woman as nigger" rhetoric.

Writing Assignment 3:

Turn to page 140 in the essay by Hacker. You see here a chart of the castelike status of women and Negroes. Set up your own chart using this one as a model, and list under it the points of comparison and contrast Myrdal makes in his essay. Use Myrdal's arguments, not Hacker's or your own.

*Dorothy Sayers, "The Human-Not-Quite-Human."*

Perhaps some day there will be no need to discuss the problems of women in a course such as this. Dorothy Sayers would welcome that day. In the meantime, here is a chance to chuckle a bit. Notice Sayers' skill in writing, her use of sarcasm, her metaphors. (For a definition of "metaphor," see p. 51 of this syllabus.)

If you think that women have been given just treatment by the press in recent years, consider this quotation from the KANSAS CITY TIMES of March 22, 1972:

> A breezy blonde testified at the . . . trial yesterday . . . added the witness, Mrs . . ., who looked shapely in black boots and miniskirt.

Now what does all this have to do with her testimony? How would you men like it if this were to read:

> A breezy sideburned redhead testified . . . added the witness, Mr . . ., who looked chic in his tightfitting blue knit suit and cowboy boots?

As for Sayer's second topic, that of female oppression by the church, some progress has been made recently in that area: women members finally are allowed to vote in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod; several denominations have removed a few specifically male-oriented phrases from their liturgies (e.g., "sons of God" has been changed to "children of God"); some now permit the ordination of women as clergy; and at least one Catholic theologian-nun has suggested it is time to change the all-male image of God to an androgynous one, if we are to retain an anthropomorphic image at all.

Writing Assignment 4:

a. Relate one or more experiences from your own life, where you or someone you knew was treated not as a person but as a woman, in the sense Sayers means. What are your feelings about the incident(s)?

b. State ways in which the churches, that is, the institutions of the Judeo-Christian tradition, have contributed to the suppression of women, keeping in mind, however, what Sayers says about Jesus Christ. If you wish, read Karen Horney's article in MASCULINE/FEMININE, page 111, where she discusses the Eve-Virgin-witch attitudes of church men toward women.

*Simone de Beauvoir, "An Androgynous World."*

As the introduction in this book states, reading THE SECOND SEX is a must for any of you who want to delve deeply into the status of women. Even though it was written in 1949, de Beauvoir's book is still the most comprehensive work on this subject; almost all later works by others merely elaborate, or update, or Americanize (she writes from a French perspective) some of the aspects already covered in this seminal work. Many readers do not agree with her interpretations, but all would agree that she has raised and covered most of the questions well.

De Beauvoir will be remembered for more than THE SECOND SEX. A philosopher by education, she and Jean Paul Sartre have worked together for a lifetime, especially on articulating their ever-evolving philosophy of existentialism. And she has won France's highest literary prize for one of her several novels.

As you read "An Androgynous World," an excerpt from THE SECOND SEX, remember that it is lifted out of context. Each conclusion you read here has been painstakingly researched and supported in the book. If you want to discover the bases of her arguments, read the book (see Assignment X).

Writing Assignment 5:

a. If Simone de Beauvoir were principal of your high school and given free rein to institute her policies, how do you think the status of girls--and boys--would change?

b. The last part of this essay consists of rebuttals against real or imagined protests about her conclusions. State in your own words her three main rebuttals. Did she convince you? Explain the bases on which you were, or were not, convinced.

*Juliet Mitchell, "The Longest Revolution."*

Whether or not you subscribe to the framework of socialism into which Mitchell places the liberation of women, you must admit that she cogently brings together the four fronts that other proponents of the movement often advocate one at a time. First she gives you a cursory historical and philosophical perspective based on the works of Fourier, Marx, Engels, Bebel, and de Beauvoir. And then she goes beyond them to present her four-pronged course of action.

There are a few items I would like to add to her presentation, mainly information about occurrences since 1966, when this was written. While nowhere is women's status as women would like it to be (as she points out), many countries are far beyond the U.S.A. in advancing toward equalization:

1. In the Soviet Union, great strides have been made in equalization since the 1920's. For example, 35% of the engineers and 75% of the doctors (prestigious occupations) are women (comparable figures in the U.S. are less than 1% and 7%). Women now provide 50% of the work force. An elaborate system has been set up to encourage them to work outside the home: there are education or training quotas favorable to women, maternity leaves with pay and retention of seniority and position, retirement age of fifty-five with pension instead of sixty as for men, and guaranteed equal pay for equal work. China and Israel have similar systems.

On the debit side, however, as Mitchell has pointed out, attitudes do not change as rapidly as laws. As a result, women in these countries are still not in proportionate numbers in the higher-echelon jobs. And men help their wives with only 26% of the housework, according to a recent survey in the USSR; consequently, women working outside the home do have two jobs.

Finally, after forty years of trying to get an equal-rights amendment through the U.S. Congress, women succeeded in convincing male politicians, and it was passed March 22, 1972. Two years after the states have ratified it, it will become law. Then women will have some teeth in their claims for equality under the law.

2. In 1970, the birth rate in the U.S. went down.

Denmark has decided that single persons should receive tax incentives, a factor with economic ramifications for the family.

In March, 1972, the U.S. Supreme Court decided that "whatever the rights of the individual to access to contraceptives may be, the rights must be the same for the unmarried and the married alike."

3. Socialization progress has also been made in other countries: Israeli children raised communally on a kibbutz are well adjusted, according to Bruno Bettelheim, yet most of their socialization is not accomplished by the parents. Day-care centers have become a way of life in the Soviet Union, some parts of

Scandinavia, and in many other countries for those who can afford it. At the time this is being written, President Nixon has just vetoed a bill providing extended day-care programs for the U.S.

4. Sweden and several other countries have traditionally had a freer attitude toward sexuality than the U.S.A. In recent years, however, we have made strides toward sexual freedom. One index to this change may be the liberalization of abortion laws in many states, including Kansas.

China seems to have successfully abolished the sex-object syndrome, although Juliet Mitchell thinks its replacement is puritanical. Women all wear the same style of well-constructed pants and Mao-jackets, comfortable low-heeled shoes (except for old women whose feet were bound as children, a practice now abolished), no make-up, and one of two hair styles: long and braided or short and straight. It is considered extremely bad taste for a man to joke about a woman's appearance.

Writing Assignment 6:

Do you agree with Mitchell's basic assertion that in order for women to achieve equality, an attack must be made on all four fronts at the same time? Is it worthless to apply pressures in only one area at a time? Explain your position, taking into consideration the examples Mitchell gives to support her statement and the ones supplemented here.

*"The WITCH Manifesto."*

While this is certainly not outstanding from a literary point of view, it can be fun reading. The content of the poem is divided into two parts: the first two stanzas talk about the historical witches, and the second part is about each woman-witch alive today.

Before you answer these questions, read the last selection, "The Human Continuum," and incorporate material from it into these answers.

Writing Assignment 7:

a. Why were nine million women--including those posthumously sainted, like St. Joan of Arc, and St. Lucia whose day Sweden celebrates each December 13--burned at the stake as witches? (How many wizards have you heard of being burned?) Use your knowledge of history, plus the insights you have gained about the psychology of the treatment of women, to form psychological conjectures. (If you've read Arthur Miller's play THE CRUCIBLE, about the Salem witch trials, or George Bernard Shaw's play SAINT JOAN, about Joan of Arc, use them also as resources.)

b. (For women only. Men skip this question.) Do what the poem suggests in the last three lines. How do you personally feel about your own status as a woman, at this point in your life?

*Betty Roszak, "The Human Continuum."*

Writing Assignment 8:

a. What does Roszak mean by the "human continuum"?

b. List some specific things you could do, in your own life, starting today, to work toward a human continuum.

## Assignment IX

## A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN

Reading Assignment: Virginia Woolf, A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN.

Like a leisurely walk through the woods on a late autumn day, this essay by Virginia Woolf will yield pleasurable rewards for you, sometimes in unexpected places, if you let her lead you gently by the hand, if you are willing to wander off the beaten path periodically to pursue a butterfly of thought. Most of the essays in the previous selection, MASCULINE/FEMININE, were hard-hitting, filled with factual material, focusing on a few points to hammer home; they were "message" essays. A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN is different. To benefit most from this short selection, you must move along at a relaxed pace and let your thoughts follow the digressions Mrs. Woolf points out to you.

In this essay she posits some answers to the question which must have plagued her personally as well as professionally: Why haven't there been more great women writers?

The style of the essay is delicate, fragile, sensitive, and often subtle. The beauty of the words and the impact on the senses are fully as important to Mrs. Woolf as are the message and the impression on the intellect. Mrs. Woolf never forgets that she is an artist; fortunately for us, we have a small work of art instead of just a piece of propaganda. Notice how she varies her sentence structure and chooses just the right word to convey the correct connotation as well as denotation. Parallel constructions lend order and coherence. Gentle humor, delicate irony, and sweet sarcasm are everywhere. Her images are beautiful. Notice the metaphor "roll up the crumpled skin of the day" at the end of this passage which demonstrates all we have been discussing thus far:

> So I went back to my inn, and as I walked through the dark streets I pondered this and that, as one does at the end of the day's work. I pondered why it was that Mrs. Seton had no money to leave us; and what effect poverty has on the mind; and what effect wealth has on the mind; and I thought of the queer old gentlemen I had seen that morning with tufts of fur upon their shoulders; and I remembered how if one whistled one of them ran; and I thought of the organ booming in the chapel and of the shut doors of the library; and I thought how unpleasant it is to be locked out; and I thought how it is worse perhaps to be locked in; and, thinking of the safety and prosperity of the one sex and the poverty and insecurity of the other and of the effect

> of tradition and of the lack of tradition upon the mind of a writer, I thought at last that it was time to roll up the crumpled skin of the day, with its arguments and its impressions and its anger and its laughter, and cast it into the hedge. A thousand stars were flashing across the blue wastes of the sky. One seemed alone with an inscrutable society. (p. 24)

This essay was first published in 1929. Besides the ageless Indian poetry, this is the "oldest" selection we will study in this course. It has been included because it is so beautifully written, and because its subject matter is still so current. Its immediacy is especially remarkable when we pause to reflect on the climate of her times: women had just won the right to vote, but progress had stopped there. Suffragettes and "blue stockings" were remembered with ridicule, as women went back to domesticity with a vengeance. The Women's Movement we are experiencing now was years away at the time Mrs. Woolf wrote this piece. And yet she must have known the topic of women's rights would reemerge until a modicum of equal opportunity was achieved.

Virginia Woolf was born in England in 1882, the daughter of a well-known essayist and editor. Her childhood provided excellent training for her career as a writer; she was allowed free use of her father's large library, and listened intently to many literary discussions between her father and his guests, such as Ruskin, and relatives who came to visit. Because Virginia was considered in frail health, her father educated her himself; consequently, she was much better read than most women of her time.

Shortly after her father's death, Virginia, with her sister and brothers, moved to a house that became a popular meeting place for young writers and artists who came to be known as the Bloomsbury Group.

In 1912 she married Leonard Sidney Woolf, an editor who, after her death, wrote her biography. Together in 1917 they founded the Hogarth Press, which began as a dining-room-table operation for unknown artists and is still a publishing house today. She shared the one denominator which she discovered was common to all the great women writers until her time: childlessness.

Her first two novels were traditional in form. In the later novels, such as MRS. DALLOWAY (1925) and TO THE LIGHTHOUSE (1927), for which she is best remembered, she developed a characteristic style and experimented with various methods of representing the unspoken thoughts and feelings of her characters.

She was also well known as a literary critic. Two collections of her essays, THE COMMON READER and THE COMMON READER, SECOND SERIES, were published during her lifetime. A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN, as your book tells you, comes from two lectures she gave. A similar essay, about the role of women, creative work, and the prevention of war, is her THREE GUINEAS; read it if you enjoy this one.

She was considered a woman of delicate beauty and a genius by her friends. She speaks, then, from personal experience when she writes of the hardships of genius producing a work of art:

> And one gathers from this enormous modern literature of confession and self-analysis that to write a work of genius is almost always a feat of prodigious difficulty. Everything is against the likelihood that it will come from the writer's mind whole and entire. Generally material circumstances are against it. Dogs will bark; people will interrupt; money must be made; health will break down. Further, accentuating all these difficulties and making them harder to bear is the world's notorious indifference. (p. 53)
>
> . . . Unfortunately, it is precisely the men or women of genius who mind most what is said of them. (p. 58)

Each work drained her of so much of herself that, after the completion of each of her major works, she slipped into a mental depression. Each depression became increasingly severe, until the last one, in 1941, when she wrote to her husband and a friend that she would never recover. So this genius of the written word drowned herself in a river.

Writing Assignment: Answer five of the following nine questions.

1. In order to create a work of art, Mrs. Woolf says a woman needs two things. What are they? Relate these two to the four elements Juliet Mitchell says (in "The Longest Revolution" in MASCULINE/FEMININE) are necessary for the general emancipation of women. How does the fact of Mrs. Woolf's own childlessness fit in? What elements does Mrs. Woolf ignore, according to Mitchell's criteria?

2. Note what Mrs. Woolf says about incandescence in this statement:

> We are not held up by some "revelation" which reminds us of the writer. All desire to protest, to preach, to proclaim an injury, to pay off a score, to make the world the witness of some hardship or grievance was fired out of him and consumed. Therefore his poetry flows from him free and unimpeded. (pp. 58-59)

Be sure to refresh your memory concerning the entire context of this summary statement. Then apply these words to all the other works we have studied in this course. What becomes of protest literature when you apply this criterion?

3. In Chapter Two, read Mrs. Woolf's observations about books written about women. Then make a trip to your local library, go to the card catalog, and make observations of your own about the situation regarding books about women. Compare your findings with Mrs. Woolf's and report your conclusions.

4. Is the dichotomy between the woman of poetry and of reality evident today? If Shakespeare's sister were alive today, do you think she could avoid the frustrations Mrs. Woolf imagines she would have faced in the sixteenth century? Explain, and be specific.

5. Do you feel Mrs. Woolf makes too many concessions to women, that she sees more differences between the sexes than there really are? What specifically does she say that makes you think the way you do? What would she think about the unisex trend of today, the melting of sex barriers?

6. In your opinion, are all of Mrs. Woolf's arguments fair? Might some of them apply to men as well as to women; that is, are they part of the human problem rather than the problem of womankind? If so, which of her arguments are applicable to all of humanity?

7. If you have read any novel by Jane Austin, Charlotte or Emily Brontë, or George Eliot, evaluate what you have read in the perspective in which Virginia Woolf puts these writers. What new dimension is added to your enjoyment and understanding of these writers?

8. Remembering that Mrs. Woolf was an adept critic, evaluate her statement about men and criticism on p. 36ff of A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN. Is this still true, according to your experience?

9. Find at least ten examples of humor, irony, or sarcasm in A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN. Which is your favorite, and why?

## Assignment X

## THE SECOND SEX

Reading Assignment: Simone de Beauvoir, THE SECOND SEX.

Following the directions given below, you are to read a total of ten chapters plus the Introduction and Conclusion:

| | | page |
|---|---|---|
| Introduction | | xi |

*Book One: Facts and Myths*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I. | "The Data of Biology" | 1 |

Choose three from these five periods of history--IV to VIII:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| IV. | "The Nomads" | 56 |
| V. | "Early Tillers of the Soil" | 60 |
| VI. | "Patriarchal Times and Classical Antiquity" | 75 |
| VII. | "Through the Middle Ages to Eighteenth-Century France" | 89 |
| VIII. | "Since the French Revolution: the Job and the Vote" | 100 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| IX. | "Dreams, Fears, Idols" | 129 |

*Book Two: Woman's Life Today*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| XII. | "Childhood" | 249 |
| XIII. | "The Young Girl" | 306 |

Choose two from these four situations--XVI to XXI:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| XVI. | "The Married Woman" | 400 |
| XVII. | "The Mother" | 456 |
| XVIII. | "Social Life" | 497 |
| XXI. | "Woman's Situation and Character" | 562 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| XXV. | "The Independent Woman" | 639 |
| Conclusion | | 674 |

THE SECOND SEX, first published in 1949, has sold over a million copies in this country alone. It is questionable whether many people actually read the whole book; I suspect most simply pick out the topics that interest them, for the book is so philosophical and encyclopedic that it is a formidable task to read the entire work. In spite of its difficulty in reading, however, THE SECOND SEX remains high in popularity. Why? The explanation lies in the fact that it is the most comprehensive book ever written about women and by a woman. A look at the table of contents indicates that this is a treatise on biology, philosophy, history, economics, belles-lettres, sociology, and anthropology as related to woman. In A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN, Virginia Woolf dealt with one small aspect of belles-lettres, the question of why there have not been more great women writers. De Beauvoir attempts to answer not only this question but a host of others. Many other women have since taken issue with, denounced, or simply expanded upon certain topics with which de Beauvoir deals, but no later work, to my knowledge, has yet had the scope of this book.

In order to deal with such vast subject areas without resultant chaos, she thought it was necessary to organize her arguments around a central thesis or undergirding philosophy. For her, these subjects all fit quite naturally into an existential framework, the ethical-philosophical system that she helped to formulate. Existentialism is much too broad a topic for us to explore here (you may wish to pursue some of her writings on the subject if you are interested), but one of its main tenets is that humanity is condemned to be free, to strive, to seek, but not necessarily to find. Being a humanist, she believes that any person's freedom can be achieved only through the freedom of others. As you will see when you read THE SECOND SEX, she states that men will never be free until women also are free. At the present time, the secondary place of the female in our society derives from societal forces and traditions (which she enumerates in detail), depriving her of human dignity a free and independent existent. Lacking independence, woman lacks real existence and lacks fulfillment as a human being.

Born 1908 in Paris, de Beauvoir was educated in private, mostly Roman Catholic, schools. She writes of her childhood candidly in MEMOIRS OF A DUTIFUL DAUGHTER (1959), THE PRIME OF LIFE (1962), THE FORCE OF CIRCUMSTANCE (1965), and UNE MORT TRES DOUCE (1964).[1] Her father, a lawyer, was a skeptic, unbeliever, and intellectual. Her mother, of peasant origin, was a rigidly pious woman.

She took her degree in philosophy at the Sorbonne, where she first met Sartre. For twelve years she taught philosophy in various schools, then in 1943 she began to devote herself to writing full time, which she is still doing, while maintaining a small first-floor apartment in Paris.

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[1] All dates given are of publication of the translation in the U.S.A. with the exception of that for UNE MORT TRES DOUCE, which is the French publication date.

De Beauvoir has won highest acclaim as both writer and philosopher. She has had numerous works published and translated. Among these are her first novel, SHE CAME TO STAY (1954); ALL MEN ARE MORTAL (1955); THE ETHICS OF AMBIGUITY (1949), an existentialist treatise; and AMERICA DAY BY DAY (1954), a series of observations culled from her nationwide lecturing trip through America. A writer of polished skill, she received in 1954 the Goncourt prize, France's highest literary award, for her novel LES MANDARINS.

As a leader of the much-publicized existentialist movement, she became, along with Jean-Paul Sartre, the center of a lively literary and philosophical cult, whose headquarters were two sidewalk cafes of the Left Bank of Paris. Allied with Sartre, she edited the existentialist magazine LES TEMPS MODERNES. Besides being a colleague with whom she collaborated on many occasions, Sartre has been a lifelong friend and lover. De Beauvoir has had offers of marriage from him and others, but has remained unmarried in order to preserve her independent existence.

It was Sartre who suggested the idea of THE SECOND SEX to her. She recorded his suggestion and her response to it:

> I had never had any feeling of inferiority; no one had ever said to me, "You think that way because you're a woman;" my femininity had never been irksome to me in any way. Sartre's comment--"All the same, you weren't brought up in the same way as a boy would have been; you should look into it further."--became the genesis of THE SECOND SEX.[2]
>
> THE SECOND SEX is possibly the book that has brought me the greatest satisfaction out of all those I have written.[3]

The book, however, also aroused controversy, and indignant comments came from some readers:

> I received--some signed and some anonymous--epigrams, epistles, satires, admonitions, and exhortations addressed to me by, for example, "some very active members of the First Sex." Unsatisfied, frigid, priapic, nymphomaniac, lesbian, a hundred times aborted, I was everything, even an unmarried mother. Many men declared I had no right to discuss women because I hadn't given birth; and they?[4]

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[2] Simone de Beauvoir, "The Question of Fidelity," HARPER'S MAGAZINE, November 1964, p. 61, col. 2, p. 62, col. 1.

[3] James M. Ethridge and Barbara Kopala, eds., CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS, Vols. 11-12 (Detroit, Mich.: Gale Research Co., 1965), p. 32.

[4] CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS, Vols. 11-12, p. 32.

Do not tackle THE SECOND SEX unless you are prepared to be challenged. It is unmitigated difficult reading; there is no humor or plot or digression to lighten your reading. If you are willing to work patiently, however, you will have a sense of accomplishment when you can follow her line of reasoning throughout a chapter, you certainly will have many new ideas to think about, and you will have attempted what some reviewers have said is the greatest book of our era. I suggest that you do each selection and its writing assignment separately, before going on to the next. You will sometimes have to read selections several times before you understand what she is saying. Underline in your book statements that appeal to you or seem to summarize what has preceded them.

In order to help you overcome some of the philosophical hurdles, I have tried to summarize some of the main distinctions she says society has imposed on men and women. You will have to read the text to understand what she means by each term (several of these are explained in her introduction), but perhaps seeing them in graphic form will help to orient your own thinking as you read:

| Male | Female |
|---|---|
| transcendence | immanence |
| subject | object |
| essential | nonessential |
| one | other |
| mystery | magic |
| society | nature |
| spirit | life |
| reason | dream |
| progression | maintenance |

A summary of the book's thesis may be found in these words from the chapter on Myth and Reality:

> . . . The more relationships are concretely lived, the less they are idealized. (p. 244)
>
> . . . It is not to do away with poetry, love, adventure, happiness, dreaming. It is simply to ask that behavior, sentiment, passion be founded upon the truth. (p. 245)
>
> The men of today show a certain duplicity of attitude which is painfully lacerating to woman; they are willing on the whole to accept woman as a fellow being, an equal; but they still require her to remain the inessential. For her these two destinies are incompatible; she hesitates between one and the other without being exactly adapted to either, and from this comes her lack of equilibrium. With man there is no break between public and private life: the more he confirms his grasp on the world in action and in work, the more virile he seems to be; human and vital values are combined in him. Whereas woman's independent successes are in contradiction with her femininity, since the "true woman" is required to make herself object, to be the Other. (pp. 245-246)

> What is certain is that today it is very difficult for women to accept at the same time their status as autonomous individuals and their womanly destiny. (p. 246)

Writing Assignment:

Here there is no choice of questions to answer in the writing assignments, only of selections in the reading assignment. One to two paragraphs should be sufficient for each topic.

1. (Based on I, "The Data of Biology") Are there biological traits common to all female species? What are some of the varieties of femaleness in the animal world; what are some of the most striking differences among females of various species? What is de Beauvoir's concluding thesis, or theses, about women biologically?

2, 3, and 4. (Based on the three periods of history you chose to read from IV, V, VI, VII, and VIII) State which periods you read about, and answer each of the following questions for each section you read. What were the economic and social factors influencing the position of women at this time in history? What was the position of women at this time: what were their freedoms, their restrictions? Which women were most free during this period? If there were shifts or changes in the position of women, what caused them?

5. (Based on IX, "Dreams, Fears, Idols") Make a list of the ways in which woman has been symbolized at various times; that is, list the myths, the dreams, the idols, that woman has been, and is, for some people.

6. (Based on XII, "Childhood") Remember that de Beauvoir lived in France all her life and is writing about the experience of a French girl. What, if any, of the things she mentions would not apply to American girls? What things probably are no longer true in either country? What aspects are still true about childhood for little girls?

7. (Based on XIII, "The Young Girl") If you are a girl, evaluate de Beauvoir's analysis on the basis of your own experience and/or that of most of your girl friends. Which things she says strike a responsive note in you? Which do you reject as not being a reflection of your development? You might relate what de Beauvoir says here to the paragraphs about modern American high school girls in the introduction to Part Three of this course.

If you are a boy, state which things in this chapter surprised you the most.

8 and 9. (Based on your two choices from the situations XVI, XVII, XVIII, and XXI) State specific examples from the lives of people you know (without naming them, of course) which corroborate or deny what de Beauvoir is saying in each selection. Are there any instances in which you feel she is unfair, that the complaint applies to all humans, male as well as female? If so, in what instances?

10. (Based on XXV, "The Independent Woman," and the Conclusion) What possibilities does de Beauvoir propose for the future of women? Is she optimistic? Do you think our society will soon change enough to allow women to be independent in the way she proposes? Do you feel this is a desirable goal?

## Suggested Supplemental Reading: Sexism and the Women's Movement

The annotated bibliography at the back of MASCULINE/FEMININE is excellent and will serve as a basis for the suggested supplemental-reading list. Below are a few works not listed there which you may wish to examine.

### Nonfiction:

Adams, Mildred, THE RIGHT TO BE PEOPLE.
Buck, Pearl, OF MEN AND WOMEN.
Ellman, Mary, THINKING ABOUT WOMEN.
Greer, Germaine, THE FEMALE EUNUCH.
Hole, Judith, and Ellen Levine, REBIRTH OF FEMINISM.
Mead, Margaret, MALE AND FEMALE.
Millett, Kate, SEXUAL POLITICS.
Montagu, Ashley, THE NATURAL SUPERIORITY OF WOMEN.
Morgan, Robin, SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL.
Ross, Pat, ed., YOUNG AND FEMALE.
Sergio, Lisa, A MEASURE FILLED (biography).

### Fiction:

Dillon, Millicent, BABY PERPETUA AND OTHER STORIES.
Drabble, Margaret, IN A SUMMER BIRDCAGE.
__________________, THE GARRICK YEAR.
__________________, THE WATERFALL.
Jordan, June, HIS OWN WHERE.
Lessing, Doris, A MAN AND TWO WOMEN AND OTHER STORIES.
Walker, Alice, THE THIRD LIFE OF GRANGE COPELAND.

### Poetry:

Jordan, June, SOME CHANGES.
Merriam, Eve, GROWING UP FEMALE IN AMERICA: TEN LIVES.
_____________, THE DOUBLE BED.
Plath, Sylvia, THE COLOSSUS.
_____________, CROSSING THE WATER.
_____________, ARIEL.
_____________, WINTER TREES.

Sexton, Anne, LIVE OR DIE.
____________, TRANSFORMATIONS.
____________, LOVE POEMS.
Walker, Alice, ONCE.
_____________, REVOLUTIONARY PETUNIAS.

Drama:

Ibsen, Henrik, A DOLL'S HOUSE.
_____________, HEDDA GABLER.
Miller, Arthur, THE CRUCIBLE.
Shaw, George Bernard, CANDIDE.
____________________, MAN AND SUPERMAN.
____________________, SAINT JOAN.

For addresses of women's movement publications, see the last pages of each issue of MS magazine, especially August 1972.

## Part Four

### *Collision-Course: Ecology, The Future, etc.*

In the preceding lessons we have dealt with problems of people who suffered from prejudice owing to the fact that they were born the way they were--red, black, or female. Now we come to problems over which people can exercise control, individually and collectively, problems that may encompass all of humankind, not just certain groups. We all have to breathe, and none of us--red, white, or black, male or female--has much of a future on $CO^2$. We all must eat, and a diet of pesticides is deadly. We all need water, and the dwindling supplies are becoming unfit for human--and perhaps even industrial--consumption. We all depend on the same limited forests, mines, oceans, and soil, and we all choke on the same waste and pollution.

Where are we all heading? According to ecologists like Paul Ehrlich, we're heading for eco-catastrophe and will achieve it in a short time unless we quickly reverse present trends. Ehrlich's predictions and similar ones from other ecologists have sometimes won these people the title of alarmist. Is this justified?

In 1968 it was discovered that DDT slows down photosynthesis in marine plant life. We know that all sea life depends on photosynthesis, the chemical process by which green plants harness the sun's energy. Since DDT and similar chlorinated hydrocarbons have polluted the entire surface of the earth, including the sea, this indeed bodes ill. Changes in lower forms of sea life will be passed on up in the chain of life to herring, plaice, cod, tuna--and eventually to all creatures.

Other factors are warring against sea life as well: mercury levels in some fish are so high that already in 1971 certain species were declared temporarily unfit for human consumption. Fresh-water fish and fishes that breed in restricted coastal areas are dying because of contaminated waters. This is not a problem of America alone. Each year there is a decline in the annual yield of edible fish caught by fishermen the world over. By 1970, there was a great shortage of caviar in Russia because of the virtual disappearance of sturgeon. Japan relies heavily on fishing, yet is one of the world's worst water polluters.

On land as well, we are in trouble. Rachel Carson, in one of the earliest modern books about ecology, warns about the time when we indeed will witness a Silent Spring. She, too, warns about the uncontrolled use of chlorinated hydrocarbons as pesticides. Until the time they were introduced (1945), chemicals used for pesticides were composed of particles normally found in nature (arsenic, etc.). Lethal effects of these were known. When the artificial molecules of hydrocarbons were discovered, she argues, they were mass produced with no thought given to the possible long-range effects on the environment.

As a matter of fact, instead of the much-publicized effects of reducing pests, often the pesticides increase the pest density. What is happening now is precisely what Mrs. Carson predicted: after broadcast use of a synthetic pesticide, there is great success at first, followed by removal of natural enemies (no pests to eat), followed by development of resistance by the pests (they are much hardier and resilient than imagined), followed by more crop-eating pests than ever, followed by the worried farmers' using even more pesticide, followed by ? ? ? ?

We've known for some time that the reproductive systems of some birds have been tampered with. And we know that bees produce less honey now because the strains have been weakened by pesticides. It now appears that it may even be unsafe for a newborn baby to drink his own mother's milk, because of the DDT contained in it. Evidence is starting to accumulate that pesticides have a long-term lethal effect on human beings; in other words, your life span may well be shorter than that of your parents, simply because of pesticide pollution.

Moreover, our agricultural system of extensive, one-crop farming may be suicidal because it further breaks down the balance of nature, allowing for no natural checks and balances. For instance, while we would certainly miss the song and beauty of the birds, we also would greatly miss their insect-devouring ability, as they are one of nature's effective checks.

In addition to the eco-catastrophe brewing in the sea and on land, we have to contend with problems in the air. Already big cities have days when notices such as "Breathe outdoors today as little as possible" are broadcast, because the levels of hydrocarbons and other pollutants have reached dangerous proportions. School children in downtown Los Angeles often have no outdoor recess, because the smog inhalation on overcast days would offset the benefits of physical exercise. The automobile is unquestionably the number-one air polluter in America, yet each year the aim of the automobile industry--the selling of more and more automobiles that spill pollutants onto the already gaseous asphalt jungle--is recognized and applauded.

In Kansas, it appears the ecologists have won a battle against an underground threat to our environment. The Atomic Energy Commission at one point seemed determined to find a suitable site among Kansas' salt mines for dumping atomic wastes. These by-products of nuclear-powered electricity, once radioactive, will remain so irrevocably for thousands of years. In other words, your children's children, should they have chosen to live in Kansas, would have been committed, without hope of redress, to live with radioactive particles under their feet. Even though it is no longer certain that Kansas will be the site, the problem of dumping these wastes will remain unresolved for the nation until a safer, cheaper form of energy gains widespread use.

As if ruining the environment for ourselves were not enough, we seem to insist on adding more and more people to complicate our problems. It took up until 1930 for the world's population to reach a total of two billion people, while a second two billion will have been added by 1975! Already the congestion of our cities and all it breeds--crime, despair, etc.--are a major headache. Already we are worried about producing enough food (one of the justifications for the continued use of pesticides), but failing in our efforts to do so (more than half the people of the world go to bed hungry, many to die of starvation). Already worldwide plague, thermonuclear war, and famine--the big three potential "death-rage solutions"--are made more probable with the exploding population.

On matters of population, the United States often has taken a self-righteous attitude: "Our birth rate isn't so high," we say. "Look at India; that's where we need to begin." But nutritionists like Jean Mayer have been saying for a long time that an affluent nation like ours uses much more per capita of the world's resources than we should be entitled to. With less than six per cent of the people in the world, we have consumed for several decades about fifty per cent of the raw materials used each year. With these figures in mind, we must conclude that the birth of one American baby is a greater disaster for the world than that of twenty-five babies born in India.

What is the answer? So far attempts to solve the population problem have fallen into two categories: individual or small-group sacrifice, and nationwide control. Now there is some advocacy of international programs and control as well.

At the level of the individual or small group, many have sought to change their life style. Voluntary birth control is a way of life for most Americans. Organic gardening and the use of natural foods have burgeoned as ways an individual can safeguard his own health. Housewives and communal groups save bottles and cans for recycling, use cleaning supplies with a low-pollution potential, white-paper products instead of dyed ones, and fewer electrical appliances. Many are rediscovering the bicycle or at least are pooling their car trips. Particularly among many in the counter-culture, which has grown up in recent years in America, we see evidences of attempts to live as simply as possible, to pollute as little as possible, and to use as few natural resources as possible.

And yet, what good is it for one person to ride a bicycle instead of driving a car when he knows that the big industry down the block pours a million times more pollutants into the air, the water, and the ground each minute than one person ever will? Industry, in spite of its protestations to the contrary, has too often gone on with "business as usual." Granted, to change (say, to install a method of smoke purification) would be unprofitable materially, and, if undertaken unilaterally, might well result in bankruptcy.

One answer, then, seems to lie in governmental control. If all the industries of a nation were made to comply with strict environmental controls, we can be sure they would pool their resources and arrive at solutions. If controls were enforced for all individuals with respect to population, pollution, etc., the world might avoid the kind of eco-catastrophe some ecologists say is imminent.

All governmental leaders say they are in favor of ecology. The problem lies in priorities: in deciding what kind of legislation is needed most, whom the legislators are willing to hurt, and how much funding they are willing to appropriate for such bills when funding often means the cutback of dollars from favorite areas of spending. If the 1972 U.N. Conference on Environmental Quality is any portent of the future, the major powers of the world--including the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.--are not about to take any effective environmental action that might in the least hamper their economies at the present moment.

However, some steps have already been taken; DDT has now been restricted to very limited usage in the U.S.A., for example. And other proposals are being made at a faster rate than in the past. The big question remains: will these measures be too little and too late?

And other questions arise. How much freedom are we willing to give up to governmental control? Should we have the freedom to continue to pollute as we wish? What price are we willing to pay for quality of life, or for survival? At what point could governmental control become governmental tyranny?

## *Assignment XI

## THE WANTING SEED

Reading Assignment: Anthony Burgess, THE WANTING SEED.

Questions such as those raised in the introduction to this section provide the content for Anthony Burgess' science-fiction novel THE WANTING SEED. Overpopulation, war, urban blight, agricultural failure, famine, governmental control perverting into tyranny--these as well as other concomitant issues fill its pages.

Set in England at an indefinite future date (after King Charles VI), this Malthusian tragi-comic fable will seem outrageous to you but probably not incredible. Many of the present practices of our society are quite vulnerable to the point of Burgess' pen as he makes them the butt of nauseating jokes. What fun--if you are strong of stomach--to travel through a world where models of the present have been twisted grotesquely into gargoyles of the future. THE WANTING SEED joins the progression of counter-Utopian novels that includes the more familiar 1984 by George Orwell, and Aldous Huxley's BRAVE NEW WORLD.

Anthony Burgess, born in Manchester, England, in 1917, studied music and languages in his youth. Then he served six years in the Army and three years as Education Officer in the Federation of Malaya; his trilogy, THE LONG DAY WANES, is based on these Malayan experiences. To be known as a composer of music was his main ambition, and to that end he has produced and had performed many works.

Not until his late thirties, when he was back in England, did Burgess take up writing as a full-time career. Among his works are seventeen published novels, including A CLOCKWORK ORANGE, similar to THE WANTING SEED in that it tells of a terrifying future dominated by gangs of teen-age "rockers"; it also includes an introduction to linguistics and an explication of the aims and techniques of the author James Joyce.

A frequent radio guest and newspaper contributor, Mr. Burgess divides his time between London and rural Sussex, England. He is married and has no children.

If you are reading Burgess for the first time, you have a treat in store for you, in the way he plays with the English language. His rich exuberance of vocabulary includes many onomatopoeic words, puns, and words deliberately chosen for their ambiguity of meaning, to create the desired emotional impact.

His linguistic training is reflected in the borrowings from foreign languages and the many Latinisms not ordinarily in our vocabularies. For this reason, you should probably do your second reading of this novel with a dictionary by your side.

Quotations and literary allusions are among Burgess' standard tools. He loves to insert veiled criticisms of other literary figures; for example, on page 15 he alludes to T. S. Eliot as "a long-dead singer of infertility." Don't worry if you don't catch all of the allusions; few people are well read enough to do so.

Watch for his humor, usually subtle, sometimes broad, but always around the corner. The dark cast of his gruesome world is lightened by the willful hilarity at every step of the way. Burgess, in the same way as Evelyn Waugh, employs what has been termed "black humor." Black humor (or humour as Burgess, a Britisher, would spell it) is akin to "sick jokes," with which I'm sure you are already acquainted. Perhaps the best way to describe this phenomenon is to give some examples: Tristram is walking through streets of people practicing cannibalism, after a repressive phase of police brutality: "He saw no police; they all seemed absorbed or digested into the generality." (p. 134). And also: "Meat and water. It's a bit too much of a tiger's diet, perhaps, but the canning makes it seem civilized." (p. 136).

Another form of humor is irony, one of the important tools of the futuristic writer; with this Burgess is masterful. One example of his use of irony is when, at the time of the mysterious blight-famine, the Prime Minister says to his boy:

> But government is not concerned with killing but with keeping people alive. We outlawed war, we made war a terrible dream of the past; we learned to predict earthquakes and conquer floods; we irrigated desert places and made the ice-caps blossom like a rose. That is progress, that is the fulfillment of part of our liberal aspirations. . . . We removed all the old natural checks on population. . . . The history of man is the history of his control over his environment. [Underlining mine] (p. 89)

In view of the horrible precedents and aftermath surrounding this statement, Burgess could be saying that this is the final irony of humankind: that all of man's hard-earned "progress" is leading instead to his destruction.

Have we come full circle in this course? Remember our study of HOUSE MADE OF DAWN? Indians would argue with the quotation above, saying that their history--at least until the white man interfered--was one of man trying to live in harmony with his environment, shunning attempts to control it. Now then, we come to questions that form the raison d'être of this course: Is it right to plan for humankind? Should we try to solve its problems, or does this planning, this control, this interference with natural phenomena, become THE PROBLEM itself? Do we have any alternatives?

Writing Assignment:

You are to answer five questions in this assignment; choose two from topics 1-4 and three from topics 5-10.

1. In science fiction, reader interest is directly related to how plausible the fictitious world is. Can you see roots in our own culture that might well produce the situations described in this novel? Compare specific components of Burgess' world to corresponding trends of the world as you know it today (for example, electronic music). Both quantity and quality are needed in this answer.

What are your feelings about our present world after making this comparison?

2. What is the function of Tristram Foxe in the novel? Tristram is the hero of the Wagnerian opera TRISTRAM AND ISOLDE, and Foxe is the author of a sixteenth-century history, BOOK OF MARTYRS. Look up these references, then tell why Burgess chose this name for his central character. Do you view him as merely a poor sap, always being pushed around? Or as one of the few intelligent beings flexible enough not only to understand what is going on around him but also to adapt to his environment and still maintain his integrity? Or both? In what ways is he like the medieval play hero, Everyman--like you and me?

3. Beatrice was the celebrated mistress of the poet Dante, the inspiration for much of his work. Joanna (Giovanna Maria della Croce) was the canonized foundress of two convents, known as a mystic, poetess, and peacemaker. Why is this a fitting combination of names for our heroine? Is she a fully developed character or merely a symbol? In either case, what does she symbolize? Explain her relationship--in addition to the obviously sexual one--to Tristram and Derek, and also to Shonny. What response does each evoke in her that makes her feel akin to them? What did you think when she gave birth to twins; was that too contrived on Burgess' part?

4. Write a comparison-contrast sketch of Derek and Shonny. In what ways are they opposites? Think of Shonny as suffering from "future shock," an inability to assimilate rapidly changing events. What immunized Derek from this disease? Are they merely cardboard (one-dimensional) figures, or do you feel you know them as people? What is your emotional reaction to each? What techniques did Burgess use to evoke your response?

5. The action of the state here is posited on the theories of Pelagius and Augustus in cycle, as explained by Tristram on page 10ff. Tristram interprets all events of the novel according to this theory. Review these events briefly and place them into categories in outline form (for example, Pelagian Phase: wanting seed. Augustinian Phase: wanton seed).

Now evaluate this theory of history. On page 185 Tristram throws doubt on his interpretation: "Perhaps, all these years, the historiographers had been unwilling to recognize history as a spiral. . . ." Which theory do you think is most valid, circle or spiral--or do you prefer another theory? Explain.

6. Sergeant Lightbody, Tristram's articulate Army buddy, says on page 184:

> By "they" we mean the people who get fat through making ships and uniforms and rifles. Make them and destroy them and make them again. . . . The end of war is the means of war . . . endless because the civilian population won't be involved because the war will be conveniently far away from civilization. Civilians love war.

Discuss the validity of these and other assertions about war in this novel in terms of the Vietnam War.

7. What does Burgess say about religion, God, the Eucharist, dirty words, priests, faith? How do these change with the various phases? What do you think of his theological views?

8. Burgess loves to sprinkle his writing with literary allusions, quotations, and criticisms of other literary figures. Find ten or more of these, tell their source, and explain how each fits into the context in which Burgess uses it. (Attempt this topic only if you are well read or are willing to do research.)

9. Burgess explores possible consequences of each of several methods of population control. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Assuming the population explosion continues, which alternative, if any, would you advocate for your future state? Are there better ones?

10. B. F. Skinner says that free man as we have known him, or imagined him, is dying. Society, using a new technology of behavior, must instead design and control him. He says:

> . . . It is not difficult to demonstrate a connection between the unlimited right of the individual to pursue happiness and the catastrophes threatened by unchecked breeding, the unrestrained affluence which exhausts resources and pollutes the environment, and the imminence of nuclear war.[1]

Comment on this hypothesis in relation to the events of THE WANTING SEED. How much control do you think society should exercise over the individual? At what point is the fine line between control and tyranny crossed?

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[1] B. F. Skinner, BEYOND FREEDOM AND DIGNITY (New York: Knopf, 1971), p. 213.

## Assignment XII

## WELCOME TO THE MONKEY HOUSE

Reading Assignment: Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., WELCOME TO THE MONKEY HOUSE.

Read the following selections:

| | page |
|---|---|
| "Preface" | ix |
| "Where I Live" | 1 |
| "Harrison Bergeron" | 7 |
| "Welcome to the Monkey House" | 28 |
| "Report on the Barnhouse Effect" | 162 |
| "The Euphio Question" | 177 |
| "Deer in the Works" | 207 |
| "Unready to Wear" | 237 |
| "The Manned Missiles" | 265 |
| "Epicac" | 277 |
| "Adam" | 285 |
| "Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow" | 293 |

Many people are horrified by the contemporary human condition. Many have become critical of war and other institutionalized forms of brutality, of sham in high places, and of society's sacred cows. Many demonstrate compassion for their fellow human beings. But Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., does more. He writes about these issues, and in a way so comical that the unobservant reader does not realize that he is being preached a sermon. The themes of that sermon are invariably love, a return to simple, down-to-earth human values, a wariness of all political and theological granfalloons (a Vonnegut coinage meaning an artificial association, such as a corporation, club, or civic organization), and a distrust of technology. Because he presents these concepts so engagingly, he has been popular among the youth of the counter-culture since the 1950's and among the Establishment since the publication of CAT'S CRADLE in 1963.

A fourth-generation German-American, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. was born in 1922 in Indianapolis, Indiana. His father, an architect, was a believer in technology who insisted that his sons study "something useful."[1] (His older brother,

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[1] Charles Moritz, ed., CURRENT BIOGRAPHY YEARBOOK 1970 (New York: The H. W. Wilson Co., 1970), p. 429.

Bernard, must have pleased the father when he became a physicist.) In high school Vonnegut was editor of the daily paper. Upon graduation he entered Cornell University, then Carnegie Institute of Technology, but was inducted into the U.S. Army shortly after his arrival there.

During World War II as an infantry combat scout, he was captured by the Germans and assigned to a prisoner-of-war work group in Dresden, Germany. Dresden was then considered the most beautiful baroque city in Europe, untouched by the war because it had no troop concentrations, war industries, or other military targets. But the Allied High Command decided to annihilate the city, and in February, 1945, saturated Dresden with bombs, effecting the largest massacre in human history, with more victims than Hiroshima and Nagasaki combined.

"We didn't get to see the fire storm," Vonnegut later wrote. "We were in a cool meat-locker under a slaughter-house with our six guards and ranks and ranks of dressed cadavers of cattle, pigs, horses, and sheep." When he and his companions emerged, "everything was gone but the cellars where 134,000 Hansels and Gretels had been baked like gingerbread men. So we were put to work as corpse miners, breaking into shelters, bringing bodies out."[2] All of this is woven into the novel SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE, OR THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE (1969). Vonnegut feels that these horrors should be seen as perpetually fresh, and that is why he writes of them. "Yet most men are protectively, intentionally, numb to them. If the numbness is necessary to endure life, it also encourages the repetition of atrocities, the decking out of cruelty in self-justifying disguises--the grossest of which is the ennoblement of war."[3]

But it was several years before he was able to recreate these scenes of horror. After the war, he switched from the study of biochemistry to anthropology at the University of Chicago. He worked as a police reporter, a public relations man, and finally became a full-time free-lance writer.

He has had over 100 short stories published, plus many novels. His public-relations experience at General Electric inspired Vonnegut's first novel, PLAYER PIANO (1952), a satire about a group of engineers who impose an oppressive automation on American life, and about one prominent engineer who leads a revolution against the technological tyranny. THE SIRENS OF TITAN (1959) is Vonnegut's own favorite among his works, "the only book that was pleasant to write."[4] In it, extraterrestial forces arrange the whole course of human history to provide an intergalactic traveler with a spare part for his spacecraft. His third novel, MOTHER NIGHT (1961), is the story of a man who "served evil too openly and good too secretly, the crime of his time."[5] CAT'S CRADLE (1963), the novel that established his reputation, has two dominant characters: Felix Hoenikker, an "innocent" physicist who invents ice-nine, a molecule-locking catalyst that can --and finally does, through the greed of his children--turn all the liquid in the world into solid ice; and Bokonon, a reprobate religious prophet who preaches harmless untruths. GOD BLESS YOU, MR. ROSEWATER (1965) probes the problem of loving people who are unlovable; it is written in Vonnegut's typical manner: utter facetiousness on the surface with a deeper truth underneath.

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[2] CURRENT BIOGRAPHY, p. 430.

[3] "The Price of Survival: SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE," TIME, 11 April 1969, p. 106, col. 2.

[4] CURRENT BIOGRAPHY, p. 430.

[5] CURRENT BIOGRAPHY, p. 430.

He says, "I can't stand to read what I write. I make my wife do that, then ask her to keep her opinions to herself."[6] This wife is Jane, whom he met in kindergarten. They live in a rambling farmhouse in Cape Cod, Massachusetts (which he describes in "Where I Live"), with their three sons, plus the three adopted children of his deceased sister, and frequent houseguests. He is six-feet three-inches tall, with an appearance that is generally described as "rumpled."

WELCOME TO THE MONKEY HOUSE is a collection of short stories. In these stories, you see the skill of a practiced science-fiction writer who hopes, by portraying the not-too-distant future, to make the inhabitants of the present more aware of the evils surrounding us. But, as I said earlier, his popularity lies partly in giving "the spoonful of sugar to make the medicine go down." That "sugar" is clever humor. Here is satire at its most cutting. Sarcasm oozes from this statement:

> The pills were ethical because they didn't interfere with a person's ability to reproduce, which would have been unnatural and immoral. All the pills did was take every bit of pleasure out of sex.
>
> Thus did science and morals go hand in hand. (p. 29)

Notice the structure of the stories. Often, as in "The Euphio Question," Vonnegut will frame the story (as you would frame a picture, surrounding it) within a narrator sequence. Often the opening sentence is meant to hurtle the reader immediately into the middle of the events (in media res). For example, the opening of "Report on the Barnhouse Effect" reads:

> Let me begin by saying that I don't know any more about where Professor Arthur Barnhouse is hiding than anyone else does. Save for one short, enigmatic message left in my mailbox on Christmas Eve, I have not heard from him since his disappearance a year and a half ago. (p. 162)

Vonnegut delights in introducing a surprise ending, or at least a surprise twist somewhere in the story. Many of the stories build suspense in mystery-thriller fashion. And all of them are entertaining. Somehow it is easier to accept a truth if we first laugh at it. So your first objective as readers should be to enjoy these vignettes of humanity, absurd as they may be, then to think about Vonnegut's underlying messages.

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[6] CURRENT BIOGRAPHY, p. 430.

Writing Assignment: Answer all of the following questions.

1. ("Harrison Bergeron") Vonnegut has said, "man's worst folly is a persistent attempt to adjust, smoothly, rationally, to the unthinkable, the unbearable."[7] Which words of Hazel and George Bergeron illustrate their adjustment? Do you ever feel they are *trying* to resist?

Why do you think Harrison (and Vonnegut) chose dance as the mode of expression of freedom?

Optional: If you have read Orwell's novel 1984, compare the methods of thought control of the two societies.

2. ("Welcome to the Monkey House") What is the thesis (main idea) behind this story? Relate this thesis to some of the women's movement articles you read. How might some of those authors react to this story?

Ethical Suicide Houses and the pills are two methods of population control proposed here. Compare them to the methods suggested in THE WANTING SEED. Do you think either one of these would be likely to be accepted by a society?

3. ("Report on the Barnhouse Effect") From what you know about ESP (extrasensory perception), psychic revelation, and related phenomena of the mind, does the "Barnhouse Effect" seem very farfetched? Explain.

What is Vonnegut saying about Barnhouse's ethical system, his values? Why, then, did Barnhouse pass on his knowledge to his student?

4. ("The Euphio Question") Apply Vonnegut's statement, "The system promotes to the top those who don't care about the planet,"[8] to the events of this story. Is the narrator wrong? What would be so bad about a perpetual state of euphoria?

5. ("Deer in the Works") Develop your own definition of what a hero(ine) of a literary work should be. Then discuss the concept of hero (or heroine) in Vonnegut's short stories. Is there a hero(ine) of this story? What kind of a person is a Vonnegut hero(ine)? Do any other Vonnegut stories we read have a *bona fide* hero(ine), according to your definition?

What do the deer and the woods symbolize? The policemen? Flammer?

6. ("Unready to Wear") Would you like the kind of world described for the amphibians here? What--if anything--would be missing? Do you agree with the thesis that hunger, fear, war, and pain are all results of our being trapped in bodies?

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[7] "The Price of Survival," TIME, p. 107.

[8] CURRENT BIOGRAPHY, p. 432.

7. ("The Manned Missiles") Vonnegut's contempt for technology and science as it is developing today is hardly concealed in this piece. Neither is his exaltation of the little men and the solid, earthy values they espouse. Do you think he would halt the progress of science and technology, however? What lines in this story indicate that Vonnegut is aware of the complexities of the dilemma between technology and man? What possible solution does he hint at? In the context of the story, is that a likely solution?

8. ("Epicac" and "Adam") Taken in tandem, these two stories say something about humanity in our world today. How is Epicac more human than the humans? How does the world manage to kill Knechtmann's affirmation of life? Do you think the view presented here is unnecessarily pessimistic?

9. ("Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow") We come again to the paradox between prolonged life and controlled population. What is wrong with prolonging life indefinitely?

Notice the surprise twist when Grandfather returns--or is it a surprise? Was he looking out for his own welfare, or that of his progeny? Is Grandfather's solution one all people could apply?

# ATTENTION

After you have completed and mailed in the last assignment, you may make application for the examination. Simply follow these directions:

1. Make arrangements with your superintendent of schools or high school principal to supervise your exam.
2. Turn to the following page and tear out the Application for Final Examination (for High School Courses).
3. Fill in the application form and mail it under separate cover to the Extramural Independent Study Center.
4. Be sure to mail your application early enough that it will reach the Center at least one week before the day on which you wish to take the test.*

* Because of mailing problems, students overseas must give more than three weeks' notice of their intention to stand examination upon a given date.

## Assignment XIII

## A SAND COUNTY ALMANAC

Reading Assignment: Aldo Leopold, A SAND COUNTY ALMANAC.

In the preceding two selections concerning ecology, we were confronted with a rather negative, even though humorous, approach. By projecting present excesses and evils into the future, we were made to see what possibly lies in store for us, and that store was impoverished indeed. Nor could we say that any of the solutions that were offered had much sustaining appeal. Now we come to a positive approach.

Aldo Leopold also realized where we are probably heading. But he was convinced that a fortuitous solution lay right in our backyards, if only we would realize it in time. That solution involved looking into the past, or at least into the present, in order to preserve the future. It did not involve costly machines, hyperconcentrated technology, vast sums of money. It involved simply a land ethic. The land could be our salvation if only we would conserve enough of it, care for it--before it was too late. Although Mr. Leopold saw much wildlife disappearing even before his eyes, he believed there was still enough left, that if we acted quickly and judiciously, we could save ourselves by saving the land and its creatures. He believed that the rewards would especially be felt aesthetically and spiritually. But even considering the solution economically and politically, the profit margin would be very great. By simply leaving things alone, by not destroying, we could reap tremendous and perhaps necessary benefits.

In Part IV of A SAND COUNTY ALMANAC, Leopold discusses the evolution of this land ethic that must take root in the minds of Americans if we are to survive. He states that in earliest history, ethics were concerned with relations of individual to individual. Then they evolved into a concern for the relationship of the individual to a group, to society. Now we must take a third step, he says, and develop a responsible ethic of individual and society toward the land.

Most of our discussion so far in this course has concerned the relationship between the individual and his society or, to reverse it, between society and its individuals. The ways American society treats Indians, Afro-Americans, and women, and their individual place in this society have been our previous topics of concern. So far in this section on ecology, we have read Burgess and Vonnegut, who dealt with the consequences to the individual when society becomes too crowded, too technological, too tyrannical. Even though Burgess and especially Vonnegut proposed a return to the soil as a solution, neither developed the idea. Leopold does that.

Reading A SAND COUNTY ALMANAC is a fitting way for us to end this course--on a hopeful note, on a proposed course of positive action, on an evolution from responsibility for humanity to extended responsibility for all of creation.

Leopold proposes a blueprint for conservation of the land: the further planning and implementation will have to be done by others, but he has laid down a philosophical architect's plan. The first step is realization of the problem. In the introduction we read:

> . . . Our bigger-and-better society is now like a hypochondriac, so obsessed with its own economic health as to have lost the capacity to remain healthy. (p. xix)
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> Conservation is getting nowhere because it is incompatible with our Abrahamic concept of land. [And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, . . . for an everlasting possession. Genesis 17:8] We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect. There is no other way for land to survive the impact of mechanized man, nor for us to reap from it the esthetic harvest it is capable, under science, of contributing to culture. (pp. xviii-xix)

Notice that he includes under science. He would harness the technology that Burgess and especially Vonnegut decry. He thinks that, with the proper ethical basis, science will be the builder of the new land conservation. He is not a preservationist, but a conservationist. A preservationist, as the name implies, advocates preserving the land as is--a hands-off policy. According to this philosophy, nature can be relied on to set up a cyclical equilibrium through her own checks and balances. Preservationists believe that man's tampering with the environment, in whatever form, only leads to disaster. Conservationists have more faith in science. They believe that they can help nature to maintain her balance. That is why they hunt and fish, for example. They argue that, without the hunter's help in cutting down a deer herd, its members will starve in the winter, for a segment of land can optimumly support only a certain number of deer. They would set limits on the number of deer shot, they would insist on sportsmanship, they might prefer, as did Leopold in his later years, the bow and arrow, to give the animal more of a chance; but they see the acts of hunting and fishing as helping nature rather than crippling her. You will have an opportunity to argue the merits of these two positions, conservation and preservation, in one of the writing assignments, but for now, you should be aware that when Leopold describes, for example, the kicking red legs of a duck he has just shot, he is operating well within his ethical system.

Besides being a homespun outdoor philosopher, or perhaps because of it, Leopold also has a keenly developed sensitivity to the beauty, the soul-enrichment, of nature. Read his description of birds in September:

> There is a peculiar virtue in the music of elusive birds. Songsters that sing from top-most boughs are easily seen and as easily forgotten; they have the mediocrity of the obvious. What one remembers is the invisible hermit thrush pouring silver chords from impenetrable shadows; the soaring crane trumpeting from behind a cloud; the prairie chicken booming from the mists of nowhere; the quail's Ave Maria in the hush of dawn. No naturalist has even seen the choral act, for the covey is still on its invisible roost in the grass, and any attempt to approach automatically induces silence. (p. 57)

This love of beauty, this peace that comes from a sense of harmony with nature, manifests itself in prose poems that Leopold jotted down in his notebooks in the field. The description of the return in May of the upland plover, for example, is like a poem:

> Somewhere near by, the hen plover is brooding the four large pointed eggs which will shortly hatch four precocial chicks. From the moment their down is dry, they scamper through the grass like mice on stilts, quite able to elude your clumsy efforts to catch them. (pp. 37-38)

The countryside has throughout history fascinated man. From the pastoral writers to Izaak Walton, to William Wordsworth and the other Romantics, to Henry David Thoreau, to Joseph Wood Krutch, a love of nature has permeated the writing of many literary figures. Nature is usually seen as a balm, in its tenderest, gentlest aspects, often as an escape from the pressures of society. "The world is too much with us," wrote Wordsworth, who found his inspiration in long walks in the lake country of England.

But always before there was a nature to escape to. Only now, with writers such as Leopold, is there the urgency about the message: this must be conserved, or soon this option will be lost to us; there will be no undeveloped land to enjoy, no pleasures of an afternoon on the marsh, no unscathed nature to teach us her lessons. Again and again, Leopold writes of tragedies like that of the passing of the roadside weed-flower Silphium.

> When I passed the graveyard again on 3 August, the fence had been removed by a road crew, and the Silphium cut. It is easy now to predict the future; for a few years my Silphium will try in vain to rise above the mowing machine, and then it will die. With it will die the prairie epoch.
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> The Highway Department says that 100,000 cars pass yearly over this route during the three summer months when the Silphium is in bloom. In them must ride at least 100,000 people who have "taken" what is called history, and perhaps 25,000 who have "taken" what is called botany. Yet I doubt whether a dozen have seen the Silphium, and of these hardly one will notice its demise. (p. 49)

In the development of his attitude toward nature, Aldo Leopold passed through several stages. He spent much of his boyhood in woods and fields hunting and fishing. He worked from 1909 to 1924 for the U.S. Forest Service in the Southwest, an area at that time imbued with a frontier attitude toward wildlife. A cormorant was bait for a bobcat trap, a coyote something that conservationists shot or trapped at every opportunity; Leopold to some extent shared that attitude, as he wrote in journals of that time. He and his colleagues developed most of the basic policy of forest management and helped to formulate the National Forest Policy.

After he left to work at the Forest Products Laboratory in Wisconsin, however, his close contact with research made him increasingly critical of the factual bases of wildlife management. He soon was writing against bounty systems and indiscriminate trapping and poisoning of predators. In 1933 the University of Wisconsin created a chair of game management for Aldo Leopold. Drought and dust storms of the Thirties deepened his mounting conviction that our stewardship of the land lacked an ethical basis. Throughout his life, his horizons were constantly widening.

Your book is a combination of essays from two previously published books, A SAND COUNTY ALMANAC, and ROUND RIVER. Part I is concerned with what Leopold did and saw at his weekend refuge on a Wisconsin farm. A more pleasant almanac is hard to find. Part II, "The Quality of Landscape," recounts some of the episodes in his life that taught him, gradually and sometimes painfully, that few people shared his concern for conservation of the land. These episodes, scattered over the continent and through forty years of time, show how and when he first encountered some of the issues centering around conservation. Part III, "A Taste for Country," is a record of reflections and observations on life in the outdoors, indicating many of the sources of his belief in the essential unity that exists between man and the land. Part IV, "The Upshot," expresses in logical terms some of the ideas whereby Leopold, of the minority, tells the majority how it may get back in step.

It is not hard to figure out the recent popularity of this book. Finally, Americans are awakening to the ecological problem. Even since the death of Leopold, the environment has rapidly deteriorated into more dire straits. Jacques Costeau, the explorer of the counterpart of land, the sea, has said that in the twenty years of his underwater adventures, sea life has diminished forty per cent. As the Malthusian concept of population expansion by geometric progression seems to be proven true, so also do we seem to be losing ground--literally--at a geometrically progressive rate in our battle against environmental destruction. Aldo Leopold proposes one solution that many are embracing: the back-to-earth movement. Its disciples hope that the concepts articulated by Leopold, one of its earlier adherents, will be adopted by society at large before it is too late. Perhaps after the reading of this book, you, too, will become a disciple--if you are not already one.

Writing Assignment: Answer six of the following ten questions.

1. Is Leopold's solution still a viable one today? Is there enough land left for his conservation premise to work? If so, how would you go about implementing Leopold's plans? If you were a U.S. legislator or the President, what details of his blueprint could you fill in?

2. If you have read Vonnegut's short stories, compare and contrast what Burgess, Vonnegut, and Leopold have to say about science and technology. Be sure to cite specific illustrations from each. Do you think it is possible for science to have a working, sustained ethical base? Who should decide what that base should be?

3. "February" (from ALMANAC) tells of a powerful oak and the history it witnessed. Do a bit of creative writing yourself, in Leopold's style: Choose some natural landmark you know well, perhaps a tree in your backyard, and recreate its history. Yours needn't be as elaborate as Leopold's, but try to think the way he would about your landmark. You may want to discuss with your parents the seasons it has witnessed, and you may include personal history (for example, "in 1960, I was finally big enough to climb to the third tallest branch").

4. Look at a bit of nature around you--perhaps birds, ants, or weeds--in a new way, for a long time, and report your findings. As Leopold did, make some analogies to our human lives from plant or animal life. (An analogy is a comparison of two things, alike in certain respects, particularly when one unfamiliar object or idea is explained by comparing it in certain of its similarities with other objects more familiar [Thrall, Hibbard, p. 17].)

5. Evaluate, on an ethical basis, the positions of conservationist and preservationist as defined here. Considering the state of the environment today, is conservation enough? On the other hand, is preservation any longer possible? Is the distinction between them worth noting? Find instances in your book where Leopold sounds like a preservationist. Could you work out a compromise between the two?

6. In these essays, there is much homespun philosophy like this segment:

> The wild things that live on my farm are reluctant to tell me, in so many words, how much of my township is included within their daily or nightly beat. I am curious about this, for it gives me the ratio between the size of their universe and the size of mine, and it conveniently begs the much more important question, who is the more thoroughly acquainted with the world in which he lives?
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> Like people, my animals frequently disclose by their actions what they decline to divulge in words. (p. 83)

Make a list of ten-to-fifteen similar statements that especially appeal to you. Choose one and explain why you like it.

7. What were some of the wild creatures and plants that vanished from Leopold's world--and probably from ours? Why, according to Leopold, did they vanish?

8. Find ten-to-fifteen examples where the words of Leopold's text seem especially poetic to you, examples like the following:

> It is warm behind the driftwood now,
> for the wind has gone with the geese.
> So would I--if I were the wind. (p. 71)

9. Explain the analogy of Round River in your own words. Evaluate the philosophy of this section of the text. Do you agree with it? Is it workable?

10. Assuming that you have acquired some of the love of the land with which Leopold has imbued his writing, what are some things you can do in your personal life, wherever you are, to follow his philosophy? Turn in a list, and try to carry out the actions you list for yourself.

## Suggested Supplemental Reading: Ecology, The Future, Psychology, etc.

This is but a small sampling of the vast array of materials available relating to these subjects, as a visit to any bookstore will tell you.

### Nonfiction:

Angier, Bradford, HOW TO STAY ALIVE IN THE WOODS.
Ardrey, Robert, THE TERRITORIAL IMPERATIVE.
Bardach, John, HARVEST OF THE SEA.
Brown, Norman O., LIFE AGAINST DEATH: THE PSYCHOANALYTIC MEANING OF HISTORY.
Budd, Robert, PESTICIDES AND THE LIVING LANDSCAPE.
Carr, Donald E., DEATH OF THE SWEET WATERS.
Carson, Rachel, SILENT SPRING; THE SENSE OF WONDER.
Diamond, Stephen, WHAT THE TREES SAID.
Ehrlich, Paul, THE POPULATION BOMB.
Ehrlich, Paul, and Richard L. Harriman, HOW TO BE A SURVIVOR.
Erikson, Erik, IDENTITY: YOUTH AND CRISIS; GANDHI'S TRUTH; CHILDHOOD AND SOCIETY.
Gibbons, Euell, STALKING THE WILD ASPARAGUS.
Graham, Frank, Jr., SINCE SILENT SPRING.
Krutch, Joseph Wood, THE BEST NATURE WRITING OF JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH.
Laurel, Alicia Bay, LIVING ON THE EARTH.
Leavitt, Helen, SUPERHIGHWAY--SUPERHOAX.
Marcuse, Herbert, ONE-DIMENSIONAL MAN.
Marx, Wesley, THE FRAIL OCEAN.
Morris, Desmond, THE HUMAN ZOO.
Mungo, Raymond, FAMOUS LONG AGO; TOTAL LOSS FARM.
Nader, Ralph, THE CHEMICAL FEAST (report).
Reich, Charles A., THE GREENING OF AMERICA.
Skinner, B. F., BEYOND FREEDOM AND DIGNITY.
Toffler, Alvin, FUTURE SHOCK.
______________, THE FITNESS OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT: SMITHSONIAN ANNUAL II.

### Novels (mostly science fiction):

Burgess, Anthony, A CLOCKWORK ORANGE.
Heinlein, Robert, STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND.
Herbert, Frank, DUNE.
Huxley, Aldous, BRAVE NEW WORLD.
Kosinski, Jerzy, BEING THERE.
Lewis, C. S., PERELANDRA; THAT HIDEOUS STRENGTH.

Orwell, George, 1984.
Skinner, B. F., WALDEN TWO.
Stewart, George R., EARTH ABIDES.
Vonnegut, Kurt, Jr., SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE; GOD BLESS YOU, MR. ROSEWATER; CAT'S CRADLE; MOTHER NIGHT.
Walker, David, THE LORD'S PINK OCEAN.
Wylie, Philip, THE END OF THE DREAM.

### *Short-Story Collection*:

Standler, J., ed., ECO-FICTION.

### *Journal*:

Bromfield, Louis, MALABAR FARM.

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